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ABSTRACT

A conference was held to discuss concerns in adult education for women, in India, where only 18 percent of the women, compared to 40 percent of the men, are literate. A major theme of the conference was motivation--how does one motivate women to attend literacy education? For what reasons should they become literate? Many women see no need or have no time for education, so only an individual approach will work. The conference participants discussed four main topics: (1) recent trends in adult education and their implications for women's education and motivation; (2) the content and methodology of adult education, with special reference to women's literacy; (3) problems of follow-up and continuing education for literate women; and (4) problems of organizing adult education centers for women. Individual conference papers were given on these topics. (KC)

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NEW TRENDS IN ADULT EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

Report of the National Seminar
New Delhi, February 19-22, 1980

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PREFACE

The Adult Education for Women has been of great concern in this country because of high rate of illiteracy prevailing among them as compared to men. According to the 1971 census four out of five women were illiterate as compared to one out of two among men.

The adult education programmes for women have aimed so far at strengthening their role as mothers and housewives. Their productive and economic roles particularly in rural areas have not been properly taken care of. To give rightful position to women in the mainstream of the national development it is desirable that women organisations should be established at the grass root level which would take care of their education and development.

The Indian Adult Education Association with financial assistance from UNESCO, Paris organised a national seminar on "New Trends in Adult Education for Women with special reference to Literacy", in February this year. Dr. (Mrs) Chitra Naik guided the deliberations of the Seminar.

The report of the seminar is being presented to adult education practitioners in the hope that it would give new insights to adult education programmes for women in this country.

We are grateful to Unesco for providing financial assistance for organisation of the seminar and for publication of this Report.

Shafiq Memorial,
17-B, Indraprastha Marg,
New Delhi-110002
September 8, 1980

V. S. Mathur
Hony. General Secretary
Indian Adult Education Association

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INTRODUCTION

The Indian Adult Education Association organised a National Seminar on "New Trends in Adult Education for Women with special reference to Literacy" in New Delhi from February 19-22, 1980. Dr. (Smt) Chitra Naik, Hony. Director, State Resource Centre, Indian Institute of Education, Pune was the Director of the Seminar.

Inaugurating the Seminar, Shri K. R. Narayanan, Vice-Chancellor, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi said that for success of a massive programme, like the National Adult Education Programme, popular enthusiasm and right kind of vitality had to be created among the people. He said that for effective implementation of NAEP, it must be linked with economic activities and economic incentives in some form or other should be given.

Shri Narayanan said that adult education of women was the crux of the programme. The need is more acute because of the low literacy rate among them as compared to men. He said that as per 1971 census, 40 per cent men were literate while the literacy rate was only 18 per cent among women and it may be as low as 6 per cent in Scheduled Castes and Schedule Tribes. The National Adult Education Programme should, therefore, concentrate on the lowest strata of people in order to ensure development of all sections of people in the country as a whole.

Shri Narayanan said that a study done by the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum had revealed that literate women even from the lowest income group tended to give their children a more nutritious diet than their illiterate sisters of the same income group and that they also had a better understanding of family planning.

Shri Narayanan went on to say that it was the responsibility of the educated people to help educate those who did not have the advantage of education. As a practical step he suggested, in addition to other measures, each educated member of a family should teach the rest of the family. The educated husband, the son, and the daughter can play an important part in literacy education in this way. He said that universities and colleges could play an effective role in adult education work, but their involvement should be systematic and a continuous.

Shri Narayanan said that Adult Education Programme in this country had not made much headway as its implementation was not done from the grass-roots level. All Adult Education Programmes should be initiated at the village level, involving the villages in the running of the programme itself. Agencies like panchayats, schools and libraries can be utilized for this purpose. Experts and adult education workers from outside should give help and organizational stimulus.

He said that women were more sensitive and receptive to new ideas, but their main difficulty had been the paucity of time to participate in adult education programmes, as they do most of the daily work in our villages and even urban areas. He suggested that adult education work should be taken to places where men and women work. This approach has helped in pushing the adult literacy campaign in China.

Shri Narayanan deplored the bureaucratic approach towards the adult education programme. He said that voluntary organisations must move away from bureaucratic methods of functioning, integrate themselves with the people, and play a vital role in the adult education programme.

Earlier, Shri V.S. Mathur, Hony. General Secretary of the Indian Adult Education Association, while welcoming the delegates said that women play an important role in transformation of society and changes would not take place unless their education was properly taken care of. He said that students in Universities and Colleges should undertake right kind of activity for the poorer sections of society so that they become conscious of their rights

and duties. Shri Mathur said that adult education and literacy should not be intermixed with each other and it was not necessary that literacy should be starting point in adult education work.

Dr. (Smt) Chitra Naik, Director of the Seminar outlined the problems of literacy and adult education for women and indicated new trends of thought and action in this area.

Shri J. D. Sharma, Director of the Association proposed a vote of thanks.

Discussion

After the inaugural session, the seminar met in a plenary session to discuss the procedures. It was decided to divide the topic of the Seminar into four sections.

(1) Recent trends in Adult Education and their implications for women's education and motivation,

(2) the content and methodology of Adult Education (with special reference to women's literacy),

(3) problems of follow-up and continuing education for literate women,

(4) problems of organising adult education centres for women.

The participants were divided into three groups and each group was to consider all the four topics. The group chairmen were Smt. Aroti Dutt, Dr. (Smt) Rajini Shirur and Dr. (Miss) Pushpita John. The rapporteurs were (1) Shri T.R. Nagappa and Smt. Shobha Bhagwat (2) Dr. A. Dayal Chand and Miss Khirod Naik and (3) Dr. (Smt) Asha Dixit.

A number of veteran adult educators like Shri A. N. Buch, President, Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, Smt. Devki Jain and Prof. L.R. Shah, Programme Adviser, Ministry of Education & Culture addressed the delegates on various problems that were under discussion.

The daily programme was broadly as follows :

(a) Plenary session for a general discussion about a given topic

(b) Reading of papers prepared for the Seminar relating to to that topic and group discussion.

The daily plenary session which preceded group discussions enabled the participants to co-ordinate their approaches and view-points. The group reports were presented for discussion as soon as they were ready. On the last day of the Seminar, the group reports on Topic IV were considered. The Seminar was of the opinion that many of the suggestions made in the group reports would be of a practical nature and helpful to the planners and organizers at various levels of the NAEP., particularly in relation to women learners. It was, therefore, decided not to pass any resolutions or make any recommendations separately.

About 60 delegates (mostly women) from various parts of the country attended the four day meet.

Mr. V.S. Mathur welcoming the delegates

Mr. K. R. Narayanan inaugurating the Seminar

GROUP REPORTS

TOPIC I: RECENT TRENDS IN ADULT EDUCATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND MOTIVATION

A. Recent Trends in Adult Education and its Implications for Women's Education

Evolution of concepts and programmes: The Seminar took note of the various trends in Adult Education and literacy which have been developing in the world, beginning with programmes like "Each one, teach one" and emphasising the acquisition of the alphabet and passing through several phases like adult education programme which have taken into account need-based education for adults along with the acquisition of literacy and the World Experimental Literacy Programme sponsored by UNESCO in some countries emphasising the functionality of the adult as related to the skills of production, particularly in agriculture. In the WELP, the acquisition of literacy was to be directly linked with the various inputs into agricultural productivity including the operational skills of the agriculturists. In an evaluation after a period of nearly ten years of experimentation, it was found that this functional literacy programme usually reached only those who had the means to engage in agriculture and allied occupations, such as possessing their own lands, and the required capital. The WELP hardly touched the poor farm labourers. It was also recognised that the functionality of the adult could not be restricted only to the performance of an occupational skill. Therefore, further thought was given to evolving psychologically more meaningful and more mass-directed programmes of adult education.

In a Conference on Adult Education and Literacy held at Persepolis, the then Director-General of UNESCO made a statement

that for a better future for the mankind, it was not enough for the poor and illiterate adult just to know the "word" but it was necessary for him or her to know the "world" itself. It was implied that the illiterate adult's awareness of the circumstances and predicaments in the surrounding society and environment was very essential for starting and continuing the process of adult education. Later on, the Latin-American movements for adult education and literacy made more substantial contribution, on the same lines, to the basic concept of adult education and its methodologies. The philosophical formulations of Paulo Freire and his concept of 'praxis' oriented adult education has been an outstanding exercise. The work which he did among the oppressed people in Brazil has given rise to a worldwide and novel movement in the field of adult education. In Freire's programme, literacy became a tool as well as a component of socio-political and economic change. Instead of remaining a programme conducted by the elite for the uplift of the masses, it became a movement of the masses themselves. The planning of a literacy movement from the grassroot level through problem-solving by those who were subject to the problems was a new phenomenon in the field of education as a whole. The words coined by Freire such as "consciousness-raising" or "conscientization" have now become fairly common terms in discussions on literacy and adult education in developing countries.

It is apparent that for promoting a popular movement of this type, the educated sections of society would have to study the problems of the masses and a large cadre of adult education promoters would have to arise to enable the masses to educate and organise themselves for participating in development on the strength of their own intelligent perception of its benefits. This would naturally take time but this intrinsic motivational base being socio-psychologically valid, a programme which rests upon it would eventually pay larger dividends than any extrinsic incentives or rewards. The NAEP has wisely included the motivational factor of 'awareness' in its policy-formulation. The three interwoven strands of awareness, functionality and literacy seem to set the NAEP on the right track in accordance with the recent world-trends.

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Towards diversity and flexibility : It is recognised that the bulk of the clientele for literacy are women not only among the very poor sections of society and scheduled castes and tribes, but also among the slightly better-off rural population. Among the various problems which the learners have to face, the most common ones are a low health-status both personal and that of the family, inadequate nutrition, lack of employment, social and cultural oppression, and ignorance of protective legislation. Yet, the intensity and nature of such problems differ from region to region and show variations for different socio-economic strata of illiterate women. The new trends in adult education, therefore, emphasise flexibility and diversity in the approaches to the problem of illiteracy in accordance with the stratum and type of clientele and the conditions in which their education must take place.

Instead of an obtrusive intervention by outside agencies and personnel, the new trends visualise the gradual emergence of local agents of change, preferably from among the learners, who would prove to be the catalysts and convert their reference group to new ways of learning and working. This approch would emphasise the awakening of the individual's innate urge to be oneself and also to be 'more' or 'better'. An awareness of personal and group problems and predicaments leads the individual to analyse the causes and to consider the possibility of removing the causes by means of planned action. The poor and the oppressed can overcome their predicament, if at all, not by isolated individual struggle but by organising themselves into 'action-groups'. Since poverty and illiteracy are the two sides of the same coin, there is no other really effective way of eradication of illiteracy than a simultaneous effort to overcome the learners' economic problems.

This recent viewpoint is important for the socio-economic transformation of diverse groups as well as of the country as a whole because without the intelligent participation of the masses, the development programmes are not likely to make much headway. Development takes place mostly on the foundations of science and the technology that the people of a country are able to handle

with understanding and innovativeness. This is not possible without education on a mass-scale. Therefore, the recent trends in adult education stress the inculcation of the analytical habit of the mind which is essential for acquiring need-based knowledge and using it for solving socio-economic problems. Literacy is necessary part of 'developmental mass-education' because it is the corner-stone of a 'knowledge-based' modern society. As regards the organisation of such mass-education progrmmes, it is recognised that they cannot take the desired shape and gather the required momentum unless they are adopted by the people as their own programmes. Bureaucratization of mass-education programmes would prove a serious handicap in attainment of their goals. Therefore, the participation of all types of social, economic and governmental agencies in a relationship of mutual co-operation and support is now being emphasised. In this collaborative effort the learner groups are treated not as 'recepients' of benefits given by others but as 'participants' in changing the destiny of their nation. As a factor of motivation for acquisition of literacy and engaging in action for personal and group improvement, this factor of participation in devising and carrying out learning programmes is now recognised as most crucial. This leads to diversification of organisation of the learning arrangements at the local level, of teaching-learning materials, and of the system of evaluation also where necessary.

Motivation

The question of motivation for adult education, particularly women's literacy, has to be considered from several angles. Of these the circumstances of the learner, the kind of instructor available and the type of support received by the learner from the community are important. Acquisition of literacy is fundamentally a cultural change for the learner. It is not easy to bring about this change quickly. Even for those adults who possess sufficient leisure to educate themselves, the desire to acquire more education is not aroused easily. As regards adult education programmes for women it is obvious that they would have to address themselves

to the poorest sections of our society. This learner population would be engaged practically the whole day-long in various household chores and also income generating activities. It would be very difficult for such learners to find time for their learning activities and to muster enough will-power to reject some of their drudgery and accept education as an essential part of living.

How to motivate these learners is, therefore, a difficult problem. It is often argued that material incentives should be given to the learners in order to attract them to the literacy centres. Other suggestions relate to creating some free time for the learners by establishing creches, balwadis and offering nutritional and health services. Awarding certificates to learners and giving publicity to their achievements is one more suggestion for motivating them. Transfer from the non-formal to the formal education system as a follow-up programme would serve to motivate some learners. The use of mass-media like newspapers, the radio, television etc. could also be effective. Organising community meetings for apprising everyone of the benefits of the adult education, putting up plays and similar entertainment programmes for attracting the learners, some means for awakening them about the benefits of the adult education programme. Most of these measures, however, would be more in the nature of publicity techniques than motivational techniques. Motivation is an inner force which makes an individual behave in a particular way and apply his or her will to an action for personal or social growth.

How to stimulate this inner force which would impel the learners to go in for knowledge and literacy is a question that needs to be solved in accordance with the nature of the groups to be involved in the adult education programme. Each group of workers and each social group has its own peculiar problems, strengths and weaknesses. It is from the awareness and analysis of these problems that a solution to some of them would emerge. It is generally found that dialogue and discussion with the learners about their specific problems serves to motivate them to receive learning. In fact, each learner has to be aroused to take interest

in learning in accordance with her own problems. This difficult task cannot be attempted unless three important measures are undertaken.

Firstly, an atmosphere has to be created for all the functionaries in the adult education programme to become aware of the need to help the learners analyse their problems.

Secondly, it is necessary to impart good training in communication and problem-analysis to such functionaries as Project Officers, Supervisers and Instructors.

Thirdly, teaching-learning material has to be prepared to help stimulate the learners to engage in dialogue and analysis. Apart from these measures, it is also felt by some experienced workers in the field of adult education that the learners can be strongly motivated to receive education if they are made aware of the necessity to look at the world outside their individual homes and participate in the activities of their community and the economic and political institutions which serve their community. There is no possibility of women learners taking a continued interest in education unless they are helped to look beyond the home and the family and to realise that they must become good citizens by participating in the politico-economic power structure which exists outside the family and in the community as also in the larger society. It is possible to do this by organizing working women who are found in various occupational groups into united action-groups for improving their occupational circumstances. This kind of motivation has been tried out in SEWA, in Ahmadabad and in similar efforts elsewhere. Such thinking has to be developed further with reference to our Constitution which emphasises the values of equality, social justice, freedom and dignity of the individual, secularism and democracy. The Adult Education programme has to help women to understand the values enshrined in the Constitution and to learn to acquire for themselves a status which is visualized by the Constitution for every citizen of India. This motivating factor has to be emphasized very greatly in the adult education and literacy programmes for women, as envisioned in the NAEP.

TOPIC II : THE CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY OF ADULT EDUCATION (with special reference to Women's Literacy)

A. CONTENT

(a) Basic Issues

It has to be emphasised that the content of adult education will be governed by its special goals and dependent characterisitics. In the Indian programme, the participation of the adult in the process of development is the main goal. The programme, therefore, has to be action-oriented at the personal as also at the group level of the clientele. Since this is an action programme related to the removal of proverty and oppression, it has to enable the learners to critically think about these problems as individuals, groups and citizens of a developing nation. By means of raising and finding to answers to urgent questions of daily life, they would identify the problems to be solved, seek help from the available resources and services provided by governments and non-governments agency to solve the problems. Through this process they would acquire essential communication and information-gathering skills among which literacy would be prominent.

Apart from being a fundamental human rights, literacy is the learners' acquaintance with one of mankind's basic technologies : the printed word. It is also a tool for independent acquisition of knowledge, of pleasure in literature, of communication with one's kind. Development-oriented adult-education includes personal and community well-being and thus touches life at all points : health and hygiene, food-growing and food-processing, concern for the welfare of the community, care of the family—particularly children, cultural and socio-political participation, and constructive action for progress in whatever measure an individual can manage. The NAEP has briefly put all this into its three-facted description of

adult education as 'awareness, functionality and literacy'. The curriculum-content, therefore, has to be built up accordingly.

At the same time, the diversity of the learner-groups has to be kept in mind. While there would be some common core for all, viz., understanding the meaning of the citizenship rights guaranteed by the constitution, or the basic principles of health care, or the laws against money-lending, dowry, etc., the curriculum would be diversified to suit the problems and needs of the specific learner-groups. To some extent, the content would arise from wishes and condition of the learners' local customs and problem and relation of the learners problems with the environment. Briefly, therefore, the three main characterisitics of the curriculum-content would be (i) some common concerns of the people ; (ii) Learner-specificity and (iii) environmental relevance.

(b) General Content for Women Learners

(1) The awareness aspect : women's right to fully participate in cultural, social, economic and political life at all levels. The need to overcome constraints which prevent participation : restrictive-social customs. dominant attitudes of men, meek acceptance by women of their subordinate position, their culturally-conditioned lack of interest in non- family roles and the management of public institutions.

(2) The functionality aspect : Skills necessary to manage personal affairs and maintaining an orderly household. Family welfare, including control of fertility and promotion of good health habits for self and family.

Skills in promoting neighbourliness and community-cohesion for peace and constructive action for development.

Skills in improving or acquiring occupational efficiency by means of better performance tapping credit and other assistance, learning the skills of management, and affiliating with other working women to gain strength and resources from solidarity.

Skills of citizenship such as knowledge of Panchayat or municipal laws and functions, caring for women's representation

on such bodies, understanding the process of organisational elections and poltical elections in order to determine one's course of action in the light of independent judgment. Becoming keenly aware of the need to be informed about their personal, social, economic and political rights.

3. *Literacy :* Skills of oral-aural communication, i. e,, expression in speech and comprehension of what others say. Skill to raise and answer questions. Making speeches, holding meaningful conversasation and reporting the information gained from the instructor, other resource persons and if possible, from the radio and newspapers.

Skills of reading : deciphering the meaning of what is read, relating the reading material to daily life.

Skills of writing necessary in the management of personal occupational and community life.

Skills of numeracy for management of household accounts, public accounts (like those of a Mahila Mandal), occupational accounts.

(c) *Curriculum development :* Within the framework of these three major dimension of awareness, functionality and literacy, most of the diversified curricula can be adjusted. The curriculum for each group would have to be developed, in consultation with or, better still, through participation of the learners. The topics would have to be broken up into teaching-learning units so that differentiated methods and materials appropriate to each unit may be evolved.

(B) METHODS :

The methods of adult education would have to consider certain special characterisitics of women learners and their environment. The biggest hurdles in their entry into learning are four :- (i) The fear of disapproval from their menfolk and the community ; (ii) their own lack of confidence in themselves ; (iii) their drudgery which leaves them no time for learning and (iv) the lack of

opportunities to form occupational groups which could give them a feeling of being 'someone' outside the family.

In view of this state of affairs, the first step in the promotion of their education is to create a favourable climate in the community. This may be done through meetings, exhibitions, use of audio-visual media, demonstrations, folk media of communication, home-visits. etc., directed towards mobilising the whole community or 'mohala' for promoting women's learning activities. Home-visits would be particularly important for judging the attitudes of men-folk, the time availability for the women's learning activities, and their areas of interest.

In the initial stages of the learning programme the first step perhaps would be to encourage the women to talk about themselves, about their children, about common problems. With the unfreezing of the attitudes of diffidence and indifference, the learning process could become wider. Along with the discussion methed (in which stimulus pictures can often help substantially, encouragement could be given to the learners to exhibit their traditional talents such as singing, dancing, story-telling, making handicrafts and whatever else would support their self-recognisation. Carefully conducted discussions on superstitions, particularly related to health-problems often stimulate interest. Explaining the structure and functions of the body is another centre of interest which has drawn women to learning centres. Often, teaching-learning groups of 5-10 women will have to be collected in someone's house or in front of their huts for a short session of dialogue and learning. Using note-books for writing the names of family and friends, cookery receipes, simple household remedies would be a way to hold their attention and make them take pride in their learning-efforts. The instructor is basically an organiser of learning-resources. He/she could invite a gramsevak/sevika, nurse-mid-wife, a panchayat member, a successful entrepreneur engaged in a modernized version of dairying or poultry-raising, and thus widen the mental-space of the learners and draw them towards the process of knowledge-gathering. To enliven the drabness of the

learners' existence, puppet plays, games, competitions of different kinds and excursion may be organised. There could be mutual visits among learners from different centres in order to share experiences. They could visit a cooperative, a bank, a post office, a Tehsildar's office, a primary health centre, and the various extension personnel to collect the information they think they can use. The use of problem-solving 'games' can be an excellent method for engaging in discussion as also sharpening critical analysis. It can support literacy and numeracy too. The methodology of adult teaching-learning can never be formal. It is a non-formal educational arrangement with as much diversity as different learner-groups demand.

Linkages with Formal Education

It is quite possible that some learners would desire an entry into the formal system at an appropriate stage, say 'std.' IV. Perhaps, some may want to take a Hindi examination or study for some certificate course, either, academic or occupational. Such cases, though few, would have to be strongly encouraged and bridges would have to be built for their transfer to the content and material of the desired formal course of studies.

Peer-Group Teaching-Learning

In most of the learning groups, the pace of each individual learner, though of a similar age-group, may differ considerably. This is an advantage for the instructor. The more advanced learners could become his aides and also take leadership in many an instructional and other activites of the group. Some learners may not progress rapidly in literacy but would show good organisational capacities. They could lead the group to undertake well-planned action for solving some problem. Such peer-group teaching-learning is one of the most effective ways of non-formal flexible education. In the case of women learners, this method would be all the more important and even necessary, firstly, because it would reduce their dependence on the instructor while resulting into improvements of their self-image and secondly, because it would make them 'affiliate' with one another more closely, thus leading to organisation and even organised action when the occasion arises.

Literacy Methods

In recent years, researches in language-learning by illiterate adults have emphasised the need to use the local language for imparting literacy and gradually bringing the adult towards the use of the standard language for reading and writing. Also, the old methods of teaching alphabet and numeracy by mechanical memorisation have been discarded in favour of methods which relate literacy and numeracy to the situation of the learners and even each learner in a personalised manner. The acquisition of literacy and numeracy result into behavioural and cultural change for each learner. Therefore, the dialogue and discussion method has to be used and the learners have to be encouraged even to make their own choices of the words or sentences with which they would like to begin their literacy. Such a procedure, however, calls for a good training programme for instructors and particularly for supervisors whose main role is to conduct continuous on-the-job training of instructors. Materials such as cards, slip-charts, literacy and numeracy games, reading material for introduction and reinforcement of literacy and numeracy need to be prepared by the supervisors and instructors in context of the learners' needs and circumstances. This activity has essentially to replace the traditional concept of a literacy primer and render literacy acquisition a systematic but non-formal enterprise.

The Use of Folk-Art and Folk-Lore

For creating an urge to become literate and also to impress upon the learners that literacy is just one aspect of the language and other communication-skills they have traditionally known well, recourse may be had to their own folk-lore and folk-arts. The drawing of 'rangoli' or 'alpana' is a kind of traditional symbolic communication. It also trains the learner-women fingers to wield the pen for writing purposes. The letters of the alphabet may be likened to forms of folk-drawing for developing moto-images. Their various forms would lead to motor-skills. Also, the traditional songs related to household ceremonials, weddings, festivals, community affairs should be given a due place in discussing the traditions

as also for stimulating the use and study of language. Collecting the learners together in a group would be facilitated by such measures and also link up literacy with their cultural concerns.

Use of Reading Materials in the Surroundings

Much reading material exists in the surroundings of the learners. For instance, the name-boards on shops, names of streets, railway-stations, numbers on public-transport buses, printed matter on bags of fertilisers, labels on medicine-bottles, etc., etc. Reference could be usefully made to such material both for arousing an interest in literacy and reinforcing literacy.

Reading out of Newspapers or other Stimulating Material

Familiarity with the printed word in one's surrounding is an important motivation for seeking literacy. Initially, reading out stories from mythology, news from a news-sheet or regular newspaper, reading out health-instructions, etc., should be considered as extremely important for creating receptivity to literacy.

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TOPIC III : PROBLEMS OF FOLLOW-UP AND CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR LITERATE WOMEN

It was generally felt that literacy programmes for women ultimately fail because sufficient thought is not given to the planning and organisation of follow-up action. The problems of follow-up may be grouped under the following categories : (a) Planning of continuation education 'centres' or 'groups' (b) Involvement of neo-literate women in 'action-projects' for improvement of their economic, social and political status, (c) Development of local leadership among women for self-effort in planning and organizing follow-up activities (d) Mobilising public support, inclusive of fund raising, for follow-up activities for women (e) identifiation of a suitable place in each village (or different places in its different sections) for conducting follow-up activities (f) Promotion of a library movement for women particularly within the rural library system and also for building up voluntary 'Readers Clubs'.

2. The organization of follow-up activities will have to take into consideration the above points and other related matters :

(a) Planning of Continuation Education Centres or Groups :

Neo-literate women would generally belong to a variety of socio-economic interests and classes within the community. While some of them may desire only recreation others would want to learn skills which would help in earning more or in saving some money. Simple sewing and stitching, health and nutrition, poultry, kitchen-gardening and whatever else helps them may be organized as part of their learning programmes when such demands arise. The structure of such courses cannot be uniform since each course would depend on the needs and environment of the learners. The availability of a skilled teacher or tutor would be an extremely important factor in organising such courses. The financial implica-

tions of each such course will have to be worked out. The help of development departments like agriculture, health, co-operation, industries, technical education, etc. would have to be mobilized at the learners' level for offering a variety of skill courses of practical utility in a given environment. Credit institutions like rural banks, co-operatives, consortia would have to be involved for financing production and marketing saleable goods. For women who desire to take formal examination at the level of standard IV or VII, condensed courses will have to be prepared to enable them to study by themselves under the guidance of a suitable local teacher. These courses will have to be planned in collaboration with the education authorities who supervise and conduct formal schools. The assistance of primary and secondary school teachers will have to be obtained. It would also be necessary to secure the assistance of other teaching resources from the community to guide the learners in their studies. Training of teachers and tutors will be necessary to acquaint them with non-formal techniques of teaching and learning. Condensed primary and secondary courses have been offered in the past by the Central Social Welfare Board to enable women to take formal examinations. This precedent should help in organizing and conducting non-institutional condensed courses of a new type.

Involvement of Neo-literate Women in Action Projects for Economic, Social and Political Development

The best way for the neo-literates to acquire further knowledge and skills of social and economic development is to engage in action for that purpose. For instance, women may be mobilized for obtaining (i) clean and adequate drinking water supply for the village/locality, (ii) health services, (iii) nursery education for children, (iv) guaranteed wages for different kinds of work, (v) marketing facilities for their handicrafts or other products, etc.. They may also be organized in groups for participation in schemes of small savings, family welfare, recreational activities, etc. supported by different Government departments. It is normal to find that agricultural extension services concentrate more on the

menfolk than on women who consequently remain perpetually non-skilled or underskilled. Action-groups of women may, therefore, be organized to demand skill-training and modern knowledge in agriculture as also in its subsidiary occupations. In such action programmes, it should be possible to identify women-leaders and conduct special programmes for developing their leadership.

(c) Development of Local Leadership among Women for Self-effort in Planning and Organizing Follow-up Activities

In order to ensure that women get equality, justice and the socio-economic well-being of women, it is necessary to promote among them the habit of affiliating themselves to an action group which serves the cause of women's welfare. These would necessarily have to be collected from among active and capable women who can take considerable initiative. It is possible to promote such leadership through training and organizing community or outside support for the leadership action taken by women. Welfare organizations, schools of social work, University departments specialising in social sciences, colleges of different type, should be induced to come forward to prepare and conduct experimental programmes of leadership training for neo-literate women. These may be organised either within the environment in which the women would have to live and work or partly *in situ* and partly in an institution. It would be necessary to organize teams of trainers and prepare materials on the content and techniques of training.

(d) Reading Materials and Library Facilities for Neo-literate Women

It was felt that materials of two types were needed for conducting the follow-up and further education programmes for literate women : Materials for

(i) teachers and trainers, and (ii) neo-literates. As regards materials for group (i) the following are necessary :

(1) Informative booklets which increase the knowledge of the

teachers and trainers so that they may cope with follow-up studies and have ready replies to the questions that may be asked by the learners;

(2) Guide books for enabling the teachers and trainers to learn the techniques of educating illiterate adults and of working as animators among the deprived sections of society.

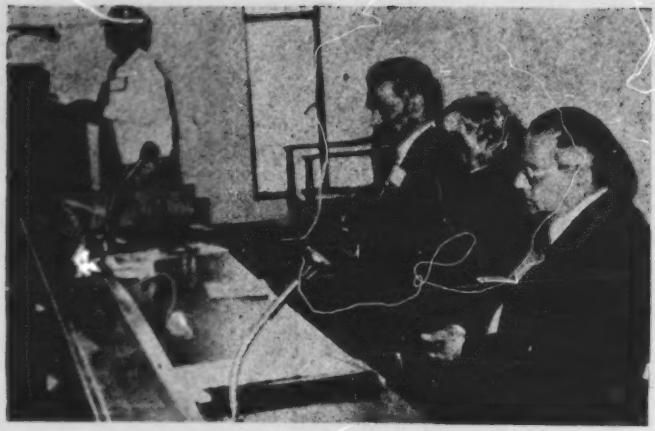
(3) Materials on the techniques of evaluation and monitoring also need to be provided.

As regards group (ii), simple and need-based reading cards and booklets should be prepared and made easily available. These materials should be instructive as well as entertaining. For preparing them in a graded manner so as to suit the needs and interests of neo-literates at different stages of comprehension, special efforts need to be planned and carried out. These may include organizing writers' workshops, commissioning writers of repute, and screening and editing literature already available in the open market. The State Resource Centres as well as the National Resource Centre (the Directorate of Adult Education, Ministry of Education, Government of India, New Delhi) should attach the utmost importance to this activity from 1979-80 onwards since, from this year, the number of neo-literates would begin to increase. Information which deals with the matters of the moment should reach the neo-literates in the form of newsletters and wall-newspapers. Action-oriented information communicated through these would enable the readers to plan activities for improvement of health, social relationships, environment, etc. on appropriate occasions throughout the year. If such materials are to be widely and promptly circulated, they should be priced low and the cost of production should be met mainly through Government resources.

Generally, the idea of developing the library system comes to the forefront when the question of providing reading materials to neo-literates is discussed. However, the problem of libraries for rural and slum areas requires much study and a complete re-

orientation in planning, organisation and financing if the interests of the neo-literates are to be served. In the rural libraries, books suited for the neo-literates are rarely to be found. Besides, as a community the rural people have little interest in books since the proportion of literates among them is very small. That new and useful information can be gathered from books is an unfamiliar idea. The person in charge of the library, generally a primary teacher, is anxious to see that books are not lost or spoiled and is reluctant to issue them out. The busy adults, and particularly women, have neither the inclination nor the time to go and read at the place where the library books are kept. Often, even for those who may be in a position to afford the time, the place where the library books are kept may not be convenient. What is necessary, therefore,is to make book collections which are of definite use and interest to the neo-literates. Special collections for women readers should be set up and it should be seen that the books reach the homes of the readers instead of the readers being required to go to a library to obtain books. A small circulating library on a bicycle would be of greater use to women readers than a large library established in a place which is not easily accessible. Children's story books should be included in the books collected for women so that they may be able to read new stories and tell them to their children.

—o—



Dr. (Mrs) Chitra Naik addressing the delegates

Group discussing the subject of the Seminar

TOPIC IV : PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZING ADULT EDUCATION CENTRES FOR WOMEN

The problems of organising adult education centres for women can be broadly classified into two groups :

(1) Planning and (2) Implementation :

(1) *Planning*—Though planning is done at the State level for the purpose of calculating the personnel and finances required for the total programme, planning for the actual establishment of the centres must be decentralized right down to the Block level and even to groups of contiguous villages. Establishing an adult education centre is possible only when (a) the learning group is identified, and (b) motivated to enrol at the Centre. This can be done only at the local level in the light of the local facilities and circumstances. Along with such decentralization, it is necessary to ensure that centres are established according to a plan in which certain approaches and operational features would be commonly found in the majority of centres within a Block.

At the local level, the people must participate in the survey of households for identifying the learner-groups, decide upon a suitable place for conducting a centre, secure the co-operation of local leaders and resource persons, and keep up the motivation of the learners. Local level planning and implementation will thus continually merge into each other.

(2) *Implementation*—The four major factors involved in implementation are :

(a) Motivating the entire community towards adult education and particularly the education of women,

(b) Training of functionaries including the instructors,

(c) Adequate and timely supply of materials and finances, and

(d) Monitoring and evaluation.

(a) **Motivating the Entire Community towards Adult Education and particularly the Education of Women**

The adult education programme is meant to improve the overall quality of the life of the people. It should be presented as such to the community. In the light of this broad objective, the community should be encouraged to decide how to establish and develop the adult education programme as a permanent feature of community life. Local committees could be appointed for this purpose. Also, enterprising individuals could be informally entrusted with certain tasks. The Panchayat and the school could be made to take an active part in promoting the programme. Some of the adult education programmes, viz., health education, economic information, citizenship information and political awareness should be organized not only for any single adult education centre but generally for the entire adult community. A difficulty commonly faced by women in attending evening centres is the feeling of insecurity. In certain places, the community should be required to organize 'Security Squads' or 'Protection Squads' for women in order to ensure that they can go to the classes and come back home safely. This is particularly necessary in view of the fact that the National Adult Education Programme is to cover the age group 15-35.

(b) **Training of Functionaries**

Well-planned and focused training programmes are essential right from the level of the District Adult Education Officer to that of the instructor of the adult education centre. Though the State Resource Centre may undertake the training of personnel such as D.E.O.S., Project officers, Asstt. Project Officers and Supervisors, it would not be in a position to conduct the training of instructors whose numbers would be very large. The SRC should, therefore,

build up training capability within the district for the training and retraining of instructors. The District Resource Unit would plan and carry out this programme with the help of resource persons trained by the SRC. Training materials should be developed by the SRC but revised and modified from time to time on receiving a feedback from the districts. As a support to the training of instructors and supervisors, the radio stations in each State should organize a well-planned series of talks and discussions. These may be subsequently printed as booklets which can be used by the functionaries as reference material. In addition to the personnel specifically engaged in the NAEP, other government personnel should also be thoroughly oriented towards the objectives and operational features of the NAEP. This is especially necessary at the local level to ensure that they participate effectively in achieving the developmental objectives of the NAEP. As women would have to participate more efficiently in the economic activities important for the process of development, special programmes of occupational training suited to the local circumstances should be organized for them as an adjunct to the normal curriculum of the adult education centre.

(c) Adequate and Timely Supply of Materials and Finances

The most essential supply for adult education centres is slates, books and equipment for lighting. If fused bulbs and broken lanterns are not immediately replaced, the Centre cannot function. There should be some definite agreement with the community, particularly the local committee, as to how such matters should be looked after from day-to-day.

(d) Monitoring and Evaluation

Systematic monitoring and evaluation should be conducted in a participatory manner by the Project Officer, supervisor, instructor, local community and learners. This process should not be cluttered up with detailed forms to be filled in at each stage. Instead, the device of meetings and informal discussions may be

tried for conducting an assessment and the use of forms should be reduced to the essential minimum. Self-evaluation by the learners should be encouraged. This may be done through competitions, learner's assessment committees or any other device appropriate to the situation. More leadership should be given to the learners in order to encourage their initiative, judgment and the real process of self-education.

MOTIVATION PROBLEMS FOR ORGANISING ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN

Aroti Dutt

In the recent years large amounts of money as well as efforts have been channelised for adult education with comparatively little results. Knowledgeable people emphasized again and again that literacy is the birth right of every human being and all that is possible should be done to make people literate, yet more than 300 million people are illiterate or inadequately literate in this country and women form the majority of this number.

Adult education does not begin or end with literacy and yet literacy is an essential part of it. It is a fact that illiterate people are too involved with their day to day life problems and to meet their basic needs than to go for literacy yet the truth remains that poverty itself cannot be eradicated without people becoming literate and capable of reading elementary printed matters on essentials factor of life in home and outside. The same is applicable for women as well.

In recent years the development of the idea of adult education has taken the shape in non-formal education. Non-formal education which is envisaged to be flexible, adaptable, life related and continually changing system of education for all people of all ages, needs vigilant workers, as well as planners and then only it can bring a change in the field of literacy for millions of men and women.

Women's literacy or education has a special importance, it is needless to point out that if we can make every women literate there can be no illiteracy in the future generation. A literate

mother's child cannot remain illiterate. Hence women's education deals with a fundamental basis of the Society.

Adult literacy depends to a great extent on motivation. A child follows instinct, learns what is visible or audible by him or her. For an adult to learn something needs the will to learn, hence the motivation part becomes so important.

If we examine the motivation aspect carefully initial problems become apparent but need study in depth.

When a centre for adult education is about to be opened in a rural area, the first question that an organizer has to face, is "What do I gain by having education ?" or "Life has been going on this way without education; my mother and grand mother spent their life without education, why do I have to be different ?" It is also often said, "Our men do not encourage us, in fact they say it is waste of time. It is better to spend more time on household chores or rest or look after the children—why try to learn something now at this age—let our children go to school, they have still time to learn".

It is a long story or lethargy, lack of interest and sense of fatalism in these women. The main incentive that brings interest in women, is financial incentive; income generating programmes get the women interested. Thus education becomes means to an end and not the end by itself.

Tailoring is an accepted vocational training for low income group of women. To learn tailoring one needs to learn how to measure and write and read the measurements and this becomes a motivation for literacy. Reading and writing letters to dear and near ones is also a factor which interest them. Reading of novels, religious books, songs are also matter of interest but these are not as strong factors of motivation as the financial gain.

A lot depends on locating and finding the local leader. Local leaders can do great deal if properly initiated. Once such a local leader told us how much prestige she has gained in the eyes of her small children after being literate since she could help the children

with their home work. When she related this experience to others it helped to motivate others. Sometime a tragic incident happens to motivate an individual or a group. One day a telegram reached a village in one of the districts of West Bengal. Women all being illiterate in the village could not decipher the wire. The whole day went by until the evening, when the men returned from work, (most of them were also illiterate) one of them could read the wire and informed that only son of a widow, who was working in a factory in the district headquarters was dying of cholera. By the time the mother could reach the nearby town, the son was already dead.

The woman often said that if only she could read the wire, she could have reached her son before he died. She was determined to become literate. Her main objective was to teach others and work for the cause of literacy. Such women are rare but we have to look for the potentiality among the women who have the hidden talent of leadership.

I remember the old woman, with long lines of age on her ravaged face, there were tears rolling down her weathered cheek, the day she could write her own name and the name of her village. She had to wait almost a life time to accomplish this dream.

Some people are born with the interest to know and learn and they gradually develop that inner desire in them. It is easy to motivate them but the large majority of women are disinterested, only finance or very tangible things can attract them to education.

In recent years Saroj Nalini Dutt Memorial Association in West Bengal ran a literacy project for women in ten villages in two districts –24 Paraganas and Nadia for two years—1977 to 1979 with the help of UNESCO. We have been able to make 1900 women literate yet our objective of making all women of ten villages literate was not wholly successful. Some of them just did not continue. Our failure was mostly in Adibashi villages, where people were extremely poor and were for the first time exposed to a literacy programme. We made the criterion of lite-

racy, being the ability to read and write freely and not just being able to sign their names.

A change of outlook has definitely come in the countryside. During the International Women's Year, we interviewed a young girl of 18 among many others, she gave a very concerete example of change of mental outlook towards education among grown up and elderly women. She said, "When I was a little girl ten years back, my mother used to tell my elder sister—she should go to school so that a little education will help her to get a good husband but now", she continued, "my mother does not talk about utility of education for getting a better match. she says—I should go to school so that I can educate myself to be able to stand on my feet and be independent if necessary".

The problems of rural girls : Girls and women in the villages are sometimes unable to attend schools and adult education classes because they have to look after the home and or work in the fields. Even school-age girls have to look after younger children, cook for the family, and carry the midday meals to the fields where the parents are working as well as to help in the lighter agricultural activities. Girls and women in the city slums have very similar problems. Moreover they do not care to attend schools/classes, as they are already able to earn something even though they are illiterate.

There is a special functional literacy programme for men agricultural workers, where literacy is correlated to matters of the utmost use and intrest to them. Similarly we may build up special educational schemes centering round the interests and activities of the farmers' wives and daughters :

(i) What they are most interested in.

(ii) The knowledge and information that is most necessary for them.

(iii) In the knowledge and training that will enable them to earn something, or economise by better organisation and management of their own affairs.

(2) Similarly we can try to interest the girls and women in the city slums by

(i) Building up educational programmes round their areas of interest.

(ii) Organising education to concretely help in their household and their job.

(iii) Helping them to earn while they learn, and learn to earn more with the help of their education.

The important question it what happens after the motivation part is over. The success of the project will depend on how the work develops and ultimate results. Newly motivated people, if frustrated later can do irreparable damage to the work and the cause.

A great deal will depend on the workers and the teachers. How they carry on the work and how they can keep the interest of the adults in the educational process. They have to understand the problems of the learners, identify their needs, study their life pattern, their behaviour, know their interest and aptitude. They have to appreciate their difficulties and their limitations for effecting an adjustment with his or her own plan of action and curricular of teaching. Adult learners do not usually make a homogeneous group. They are of different ages, different interest. They belong to different economic and social status. In fact they are often at different stages of mental development and have come to learn with different objectives. They are apt to lose their enthusiasm in a short time and often lapse in continuity of the study. A widow wants to learn in order to earn, a young wife wants to learn in order to write letters to her dear ones, young girls want to learn to make up for lost time and hoping to join a school later. The teacher of a non-formal or adult education class has to take care of all their needs and problems so that no one loses interest.

We expect a lot from the teachers and we realise the success of the work is very much dependent on them but a practical part

of our planning is often neglected and that is the financial part. If the salary of the teachers do not reach them regularly and in time no matter how much we may talk of ideology to them, the efficiency will suffer and the work will be done in a half hearted way. If the teacher has to worry for his/her day to day needs how can he or she devote all the energy to the cause ?

It is a difficult task and only their patience, interest and dedication, to help the people can keep them going in this ardous job.

Follow up literature for neo-literates is also an important factor for continuity of this programme. Adult education has a very wide connotation. It should not be confined to literacy alone, it should mean education in different fields of life such as nutrition, family planning, health, hygiene, mother craft and home economics in every sense. In other countries, the interpretation being so wide, various classes are held for adult education for women which includes training in budgeting, new technique of farming, safety at home, flower arrangement, dress making etc. Hence adult education has universal appeal, it assumes different roles in different countries, meeting different needs of life. In India, however, the majority of women specially in rural areas need education at grass root level which starts with literacy. Even in 1971, women's literacy in India was not quite 18 p.c. and it has not gone up very much.

Motivation for adult education must have a wider range and present the potentiality of improving the quality of life to the people. Though it may begin with literacy classes. If the planning is realistic, functional and a comprehensive one covering different aspects of life and meet different needs, only then we can hope for better results in this great national movement for adult education.

MOTIVATION PROBLEMS FOR ORGANISING ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES FOR WOMEN

Nayana P. Shah

In trying to literate uneducated mass of women, some problems are faced :

* Do they really want to be literate ?
* Whether reading and writing disability is really a handicap for them ? Do they realize it ?
* What are their reaction and response towards adult education programmes as such ?

I will try to analyse these questions with reference to my experiments and experiences with different occupational groups of 'SEWA'.

'SEWA' means self-employed women's association, an organisation of women engaged in different occupational and laborious activities in Ahmedabed, Gujarat.

Majority of SEWA members are illiterate. During its first four years SEWA tried to organise literacy class 17 times but all the attempts failed. They did not find the classes of any relevance to their home, life or work.

Afterwards from January 1978 to March 1979 I had some experiments with different occupational groups like vegetable vendor group, used garment group, fish-selling group, incent-making group, ready-made dress making group, scrap dealers group etc.

These are my findings —

The question of age-group

In different groups we had only the age-group of 13 to 20. No adult women turned up.

A woman of the used garment group told, "No I will not attend the class. How can I come ? I must go far 'feri' (selling utensils in exchange of clothes). Please write my younger daughters' names".

Why ?

The mother goes for 'feri' and the elder daughter has to perform various duties. She has to make 'roti'. She has to look after four to five younger brothers and sisters. She has to perform various household duties.

So, neither mothers nor elder daughters can afford the luxury of formal education. The time of 11 to 5 is very inconvenient to them. So in different groups, it is only the younger daughters who come. For them our adult education classes are really a good opportunity.

Why the adult women do not come for classes ?

Being bread-earners they are very busy in their occupations. For example, a milk-producer woman has to work right from early morning to late night, same with working women of different groups.

How can they spare time ? To spare two hours a day is completely impossible for them.

And of course we could organise classes only during after noon hours. The possibility of night classes is remote as it is very difficult for a teacher living far off to go to the slum-area at right time.

The possibilty of an educated lady teacher belonging to the same area and community is yet to be explored.

Problem of Motivation

In 'SEWA' bank I had one experiement. For bank-work majority of women have to wait for quite a long period.

I tried to pursuade them, "Are you literate or illiterate if illiterate, do you, intend to learn anything ?".

Very few women expressed their eagerness to learn. Their reactions were remarkable.

- ☐ 'What good has it (education) ever brought to any body ?
- ☐ 'What purpose does it ever serve ?'
- ☐ 'Will you give us job if we study ?'
- ☐ 'We shall rather study in the heaven above '.
- ☐ 'We have hardly any time to spare'.
- ☐ 'It suits us most to put a thumb impression'. What purpose should it serve if we study at this age ?.

In the light of the experiences and experiements mentioned above, I would like to submit following points :

(1) For bread-earning women money is an essential thing. They want short-cut methods for improving their standard of living.

They equate the education with employment status and salary.

(2) An intense urge to imbibe literacy is yet to be aroused in them. Moreover, we don't have exact ideas and also effective media for making them realize the need of literacy in daily life.

(3) The concept of literacy in its true sense is not yet realized by uneducated women.

We think in terms of functional literacy. To them, literacy means ability to read and write -- that's all.

We could not interweave literacy with functionality and developmental projects. So they are not motivated.

(4) Most of these communities have a rather crude notion about the role and purpose of education. According to their bringing up, life-mission of a woman is to marry, rear children, cook and look after other similar things—hence what is the need of education ? That is to say, they fail to see that besides providing employment opportunities, education plays a culturally enriching role too.

However from motivation viewpoint a curious contradiction must be resolved : How is it that these self-employed women think of women being strictly household animals ? Conditioning, indeed !

These are some problems of motivation.

To meet this challenge--

(1) We must have talented, sincere and regular team of teachers who are closely conversant with the problems of life and work of the trainees.

The success or failure of adult education programmes depend upon the literacy teachers' regularity and sincerity.

(2) We must have need-oriented and also interest-catching programmes which directly affect their lives and occupations.

For example, a vegetable vendor woman who usually feels harassed by the so-called enforcement people will be more interested in learning figure-reading (i.e. amount of the fine) rather than having education on the lines of the various preconceived notions and targets envisaged under the banner of adult education. Such type of literacy would fulfil her need and hence it will be interest catching too.

(3) Course-curriculum, targets and learning-hours must be dealt with utmost flexibility so as to suit the need, pur-

pose and convenience of the group concerned.

Here, as a case-study, I would like to make a passing reference to Bilkis, a working woman associated with SEWA. From a simple, illiterate daily-wager she has now become an Assistant Manager of the Chindi-making group. For that of course we had to make her learn. During that period we found out that her interests simply pertained to making receipts and keeping accounts of the chindi business. Even today she is neither interested in reading the holy Kuran nor in writing letters to her relatives.

If we had insisted on the targets set by the present-day adult education scheme, perhaps the net gain would have been loosing Bilkis' interest. Hence the dire need to suit the general literacy drive to the particular individual.

Individual attention and case-study method are must. Our emphasis must be on qualitative approach rather than on quantitative approach.

(4) We ought to make research an effective method of making one read and write and also about suitable reading materials.

MOTIVATION OF WOMEN IN THE ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMME

(A study of nine selected centres organised by three voluntary organisations in Delhi)

Mridula Seth

One of the problems identified in the field of adult education is the difficulty of motivating women to join the programme and sustaining their motivation in it. In a non-formal education programme, adults are free to join and leave a group according to their convenience, therefore, the programme must be 'need-based' in order to attract the women. There are three reasons why people join a group : (a) they like the activity/activities carried out in the group; (b) they like the people in the group and (c) by belonging to the group they can avail of certain privileges which are not possible as non participants.

Experience of workers engaged in adult education reveals that illiterate women, belonging mostly to the lower socio-economic groups are not highly motivated to join the adult education programme because of their need to become literate or gain social awareness. They join either because they like the activities in the centres or because of the people in the group.

An in-depth study of nine centres belonging to three voluntary organisations was carried out in Delhi to find out; (a) reasons for joining the classes and discontinuing; (b) the interaction amongst the group members participating in the programme. Sociometric choices related to friendship and task situation i.e., literacy were utilised for determination of an index of group cohesiveness and pattern of interaction amongst the group members.

After a gap of four months, the learners were interviewed again to find out the drop-outs and the reasons for it. Total sample comprised of 104 subjects The following questions were asked: (i) "you come to the centre for learning to read and write. Since there are many women in the class, the teacher does not have time to help each person individually. If you have a problem in literacy and the teacher is busy, whom do you approach for help in the group?" (choices in literacy); (ii) you come to the centre only for a short time and would like to sit next to a person with whom you are friendly. Name the persons in the group with whom you like to sit" (choices in friendship).

The groups consisted of not more than 15 members in each group living in the same geographical area and familiar with each other; the centres had been in operation for ever 6 months and the women had been participating in the programme for at least one month to ensure minimum interaction with each other. A good rapport was established with the learners before conducting this test.

Findings of the study reveal that literacy was not a felt need of the women and majority of them had joined the programme for other reasons. Out of 104 participants, only 38% were interested in literacy. Of these, only 13 women desired to attain literacy skill enabling them to read books, magazines etc. while 27 of them simply wanted to be able to write letters. 13 of those interested in literacy did not expect to go beyond signing their names and reading bus numbers.

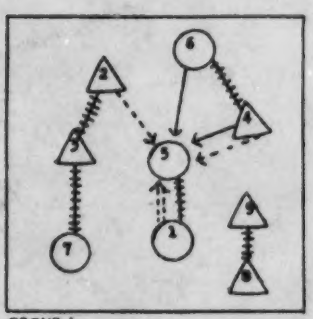
Since education is not a felt need of the women, there is a need to incorporate other activities in the programme. Tailoring was a very popular activity and in six out of nine centres, it was an important component of the programme. Out of 75 women who had the option of selecting this activity, as many as 55(73%) had joined the adult education programme because of this activity. The teachers felt that through this activity they could transform

their unfelt needs into felt needs and make them realise the importance of literacy in drafting of garments.

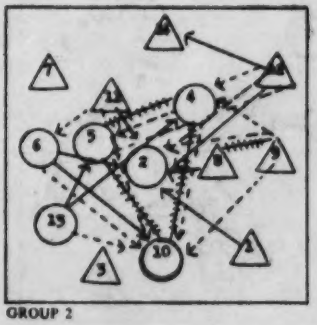
There are a number of reasons for the women to drop-out of the programme. An important reason identified in the study was the pattern of group interaction.

Sociograms depicting interaction amongst group members show a relationship between interaction and their continuation in the programme. Those who had received choices from others continued to participate in the programme. In other words, the drop-outs were those who felt unwanted by others and did not have a sense of belongingness to the group. The difference in the interaction pattern of group 2 and 6 suggests that an effort should be made by the teacher to create opportunities in the class for women to interact with each other in order to strengthen group cohesiveness and develop a sense of belongingness. Method of teaching and organisation adopted by the teacher is important in sustaining the motivation of the participants. Discussions, songs, stories, excursions etc., help to develop this feeling. Motivating women to join the programme is of vital importance but even more important for the success of the adult education movement is the effort to sustain the motivation of each and every adult who has the opportunity of joining the programme.

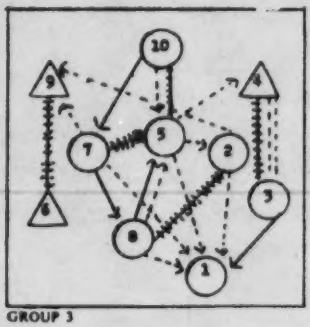
Interaction amongst members of the selected Groups
(Sociometric choices)



GROUP 1



GROUP 2



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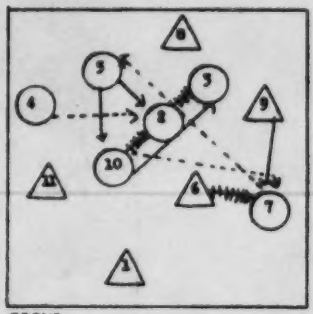

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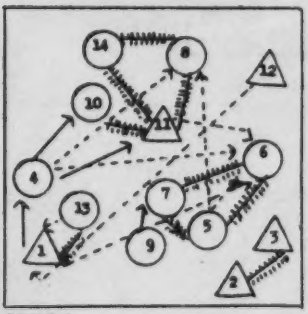

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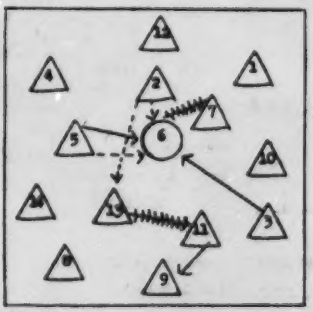

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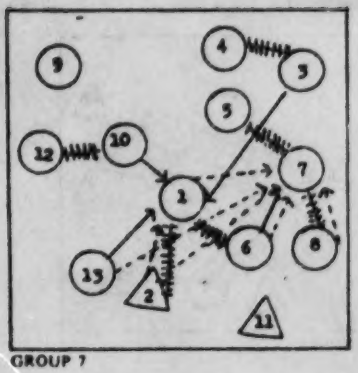

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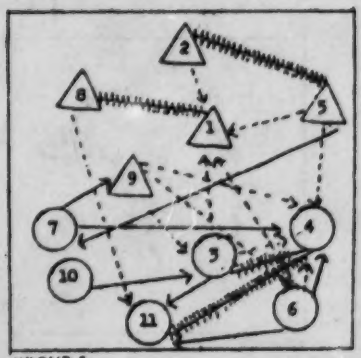

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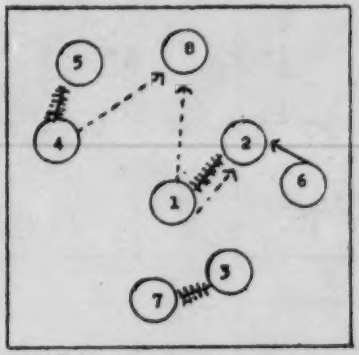

GROUP 9

(follow up not possible because the participants had changed residence)

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DROP-OUTS, LEFT-OUTS AND PUSH-OUTS IN WOMEN'S EDUCATION

Rajani R. Shirur

Introduction

The low level of literacy among women and more so among rural women is of greatest concern today. Of the total population in our country, 284 million are women. Of this over 80% live in rural areas. Literacy among rural women is as low as 13%. The 1971 census indicate that out of 352 districts in the country women's literacy rate in rural areas is less than 5% in 83 districts and ranges from 5 to 10% in another 113 districts. This indicates the magnitude of the problem we face today.

The Problem

These women are by and large as a group, consciously neglected, socially disorganised and unorganised and economically poor. The increasing poverty and illiteracy, and its resulting misery and the growing burden of work in addition to lack of both physical and emotional support from the family make them remain an opporessed class in the society.

World over education of women has been recognised as a critical variable in improving the status of women, infusing knowledge and skills relevant to their role in socio-economic development and in refining their ability to make decisions in activities with developmental objectives and goals.

There are several basic issues that need consideration in planning and implementing adult education programmes including literacy for women. We are all aware that a few problems relate

to the time and setting suitable for rural women, some to the messages and methods in teaching-learning process and others relate to the role and abilities of educators.

While probing into the causes for drop-out, push-out and left-out, one should bear in mind that these have closer relationship to the motivational factors. From experience we learn that younger the women are, better their response towards literacy.

From this one should infer that it is not true that literacy attracts younger women, but they have *less apathy* towards education as a whole. They have also comparatively less problems and entanglements in their personal life. The older women find less use for a literacy skills in their personal home and work life. All these attribute to higher level of left-outs and drop-outs particularly among older women i.e. among 25-45 years of age group.

As pointed out above, the major problem therefore lies in enrolling illiterate women at the Centres. Women's Centres are attended in most places by young girls between 12 to 18 years, most of whom are drop-outs, some of whom have no doubt relapsed into illiteracy.

Causes for Dropouts, Leftouts and Pushouts

The primary causes for dropouts, leftouts and pushouts are :

(1) Personal attitudes and apathy
(2) Non-availability of time—overburdened with responsibilities for home, children and work outside
(3) Type of occupation and economic status
(4) Larger and complex family
(5) Male dominance
(6) Number of children, particularly young children
(7) Pregnancy, sickness of self or any one else in the family
(8) Community influence
(9) Fatigue—mental and physical
(10) No relationship or use found of literacy skills for their daily life

(11) Self-determined learning needs

(12) Mobility—physical

(13) Heterogeneous groups—slow rate of progress

(14) Clicks among the learners

(15) Attitudes of other members in the family—their indifference or antagonism

(16) Inappropriate choice of centres

In general all these causes could be classified as

Individual Learner Characteristics	Learner Group Characteristics	Animateur Characteristics
Family	Heterogenity—age,	Commitment
S. E. S.	Sex/Competencies	
Personal	Clicks	
General	Interests	

Right Approach

Every attempt to develop literacy skills in rural women should be supported by two major activities :

(1) A balwadi

(2) An economic programme

Enrollment in this context is a wrong word to use—for no regular school-like system should exist. Informal methods with discussions, demonstrations and the use of rural folk-lore based programmes easily appreciated by rural women should alone be encouraged primarily.

Mahila mandals should be activated and these should plan for vocational-employment schemes. For instance, Food for Work Programme, Housing schemes, Road works etc. Housing schemes need for instance both skilled and unskilled workers and these provide women opportunities for training and employment thereby diverting a sizable rural women from agricultural labour to jobs like masonary, quarrying, brick-laying, metal-breaking etc. Every such schemes should have functional literacy component plus Balwadis.

Organising Women — A Basic Need

For implementing literacy programmes for women, it is basic to organize women in rural areas first and involve them in a number of socio-economic programmes. For without economic component, the literacy effort becomes a failure. The women whom we want to teach doubt our bonafide. They have apathy to reading and writing for adult education programme content, as it exists till date, are hardly perceived by the recipients (women) as useful. It does not further lead to satisfaction or better performance.

Again they have very little leisure. In addition many often have sad experiences of their own children, though educated, remaining unemployed. Determined by their own needs, and by the way they perceive the motives of educators, the recipients have varied reaction. Some resent, some remain indifferent and as such remain leftouts for it only points out their own deficiencies, inabilities and dependencies.

Only under certain conditions, both the giver and the receiver grow and develop. In general, people tend to grow where there is reciprocal dependence—interdependence, joint determination of goals, real communication in depth and reciprocal trust. To the degree, these conditions are absent, people fail to react and grow.

Adult Education Programme Content

Programmes of development must be transformed to educational work, organizational work and economic work. It must have a certain educational content, training content, organizational content and economic content.

Tailoring, embroidery, stitching are all area of the past and we must now explore into future needs. We must be able to identify and provide training in several areas where mechanisation has taken over, wherein acquisition of literacy skills will become a necessity for them. It does not mean that traditional area of skills are to be neglected. They ought to be supported and strengthened but new areas of the future are also to be explored and developed and training should be provided in that.

Informal education, as indicated earlier should give way gradually to literacy and functional literacy. Crafts should be included. Short duration and vocational and craft courses should be arranged. As motivating devices, folk song competitions, Rangoli competitions etc. should be organised. A periodical health and medical check-up for the entire family of the learners should take place at the Centre.

Every attempt should be made to divert agricultural labour women possibly to some other vocation. More active support should be mobilized from the existing institutions and programmes like Banks, Khadi Gramodyog and DICs.

Tapping Women's Potentialities

It is often being said that the level of aspiration of women is very low and women are quite satisfied with what they are and what they have. Unless we create a congenial environment suitable for developing the aspirations and increasing their level of aspiration, there is no point in supporting the said argument.

Women have, by nature, greater organizational ability, greater perseverance, greater aptitude for methods, cleanliness, orderliness and so on. With their nimble fingers and deftness, it is for us to exploit their creative and organizational ability and thereby increase their level of aspirations too.

—o—

APPENDIX

Goals, Techniques and Field of Action for Planning and Implementing Adult Education including Literacy for Women.

Goals :

Changing the cultural norms and pattern of life—Development of individual women based on changed cultural values and norms. These could be expressed in terms of moral, spiritual, psychological, economic, social and political.

Means & Directions

Education begins with economic education through group action leading to cultural, social and economic changes in the attitudes and behaviours of all women in the Society.

Techniques

1. Group meetings—Informal and small
2. Folk-clubs
3. Associations of specific women group
4. Organization of Training Courses—Leadership Courses, Vocational Training—non-*traditional types*.
5. Films and mass media groups.

Fields of action

Form Unions

1. **For organizing Women at Village level:**
   (a) Labourers (for wages)
   (b) Farm women working on their own farm
   (c) Housewives
   (d) Other workers

2.	**Economic Organization for women :**	(a) Create credit unions (b) Cooperative Credit society for women (c) Cooperative mortgage bank for women
3.	**For consumption:**	Cooperative Stores for food-stuffs and other items.
4.	**For production :**	Fully utilize the existing Village Khadi and Handicrafts Organizations. Cottage Industries, Weavers' Cooperatives etc.
5.	**For Marketing and other services :**	Cooperative Sales Societies—Retail and wholesale. **Health** and medical camps—periodical
6.	**Cultural :**	Reading rooms, folk clubs etc.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE METHODOLOGIES AND CONTENT OF LITERACY EDUCATIONS FOR WOMEN SPECIALLY IN RURAL AREA

A. Dyal Chand

This paper is based on the experience of a working group based in Marathwada in Maharashtra. Two pilot centres for Adult Literacy were initiated in January 1979 to gain experience in the problems involved, develop lesson plans which were need based and develop a methodology which could be replicated for an Adult Education Programme for rural women. This paper is based on our experience with these two pilot centres. We endeavoured to learn from these women of their interests and needs and how the application of literacy would help them to improve their life style.

At the very outset the goals or the ultimate aims and objectives of the National Adult Education Programme have to be made clear. In educating adults there can be only two possible objectives.

(a) To teach them how to read and write.

(b) To impart knowledge to the illiterate poor so that they can benefit from it. This knowledge would relate to existing functions in their lives or new functions introduced with the aim of improving their socio-economic status. The Adult Education programme could then be defined as a Functional Literacy or an applied literacy programme where literacy disseminated is applied to improving existing ways and in introducing new programmes of socio-economic uplift. To such dissemination of knowledge the word "Awareness" is usually applied.

The findings of the study group was as follows. The discussions with the participants are divided under two main headings.

(a) To generate an ability among the rural illiterate to read and write.

(b) The second possible approach that of functional Literacy or awareness.

(a) (1) From our baseline survey we found that 40 to 50% of the rural population is composed of landless labourers.

Economic stratification in Marathwada is as follows :

Landless Agricultural labourers	—35%
Landless construction labourers	—15%
Farmers	—20%
Marginal farmers	—20%
Others	—10%

From this it is clear that the focus of the Adult Education Programme will have to be on the largest population group i.e. landless labourers.

(2) During our discussions with the participants, the women were not interested in a literacy programme that would merely facilitate an ability to read and write, as they felt that, that ability would be of no value to them in improving their life style. These women start the days work at 6 in the morning and come back from the fields at 7 in the evening following which they have to prepare the meals for the family before retiring for the day. The motivation to attend an Adult Education class for one hour after coming back tired from work at 8 p.m. would obviously have to be extremely high.

(3) The number of existing children who are either not going to school or are dropouts because of socio-economic pressures makes an Adult Literacy Programme irrelevant if the only purpose and objectiv. of the programme is to make adults capable of reading and writing.

If that is the sole objective of the programme then it is very necessary that we focus on the vast number of children who for various reasons are not attending school. From the interviews with our participants it became very clear that they would be interested in an Adult Literacy Programme only if it could change their socio-economic life style.

The mere ability to read and write is not a need felt by the landless illiterate community in rural areas which is obvious from the fact that a large population of the families do not even feel the need of this education for their children.

(b) The Second Possible Approach is that of Functional Literacy or "Awareness".

If the contents of the adult education programme are to be need based then we must consider the felt needs of the community so that the Adult Literacy programme becomes a tool in bringing about awareness and in disseminating knowledge which is relevant. Awareness has become such a commonly used jargon in the field of development that if left undefined, it would be the most vague and abstract entity. What are we trying to make the people aware of? Do they need this awareness? How is this new awareness going to affect their life style.

During our discussions with several people working in the field of Adult Literacy we came up with the following possible areas in which awareness could be created.

1. *Health* : This need becomes relevant only during sickness. Continued interest in this field cannot be sustained.

2. General Public facilities : General public facilities include banks, post office, co-operatives etc. To this suggestion, our participants replied that with the constant day to day struggle of finding work which is gener-

ally available only during season, the responsibility of providing the children their two meals every day, spare money that could be put aside in a bank or a post office or invested in a co-operative was unthinkable.

3. *Political education :* Evaluation of a political party or a Government, for the rural poor is based on one factor which Government can provide them essential commodities at the most reasonable price. Beyond that political interest is limited to local village politics.

4. *Laws :* We could bring about an awareness of the laws meant for and beneficial to the weakest section of our rural community. Laws such as the minimum wage act, exemption from old debts, etc. Mere knowledge of these protective measures is only going to create more frustration and strife unless there is a very effective Government machinery to enforce these laws.

5. *Economic and Development Programmes* : There are innumerable economic and development programmes initiated by the Government. The 50% landless community is rarely benefitted substantially from these programmes. There are subsidies on practically every agro-related facility or amenity such as subsidy on purchase of fertilizers, fodder for live stock, agricultural implements and machines. In creating all these subsidies we tend to lose sight of the fact that there is perhaps more disproportion in the distribution of money in rural areas than it is in urban areas. Especially where the economic stratification results in a handful of 20% landed rich and 50% landless illiterate poor, is it at all conceivable that the subsidies on these amenties could possibly reach the poorest sections of our rural community. If they cannot then bring about an awareness of their existence is as irrelevant for the landless poor.

The contents of the adult literacy programme would therefore depend upon the final aims and objectives of the programme.

Is the main objective to teach people how to read and write which they will not be able to apply to their existing work which is manual labour or is it to bring about an awareness which can lead to ultimate socio-economic liberation. If it is the former it serves no purpose as it is not relevant to the landless poor. If it is the latter then the content of the adult literacy programme would have to be established, keeping in mind the fact, that following the adult literacy programme efforts would have to be made to implement socio-economic programmes regarding which awareness has been created. In that case the Adult Literacy Programme becomes in reality a functional literacy programme creating awareness for the added functions which have been introduced in the lives of the landless poor thereby liberating them from the existing economic stranglehold.

The conclusion that our working group arrived at from our experience with these participants was that the introduction of Functional Literacy or what we define as "awareness" is possible only if the related functions are introduced first to which this literacy is to be applied. For example if we are to teach them about existing laws and legislations benefiting the poor the laws must first be enforced. Education about general public utilities must be introduced only after ensuring that landless illiterate poor have an open access facilities. Similarly awareness of existing subsidies and schemes started by the Government is relevant only if introduction of these in their lives can be ensured.

The conclusions and recommendations of the study group were as follows :-

1) To link the National Adult Education Programme with the instensive rural development programme the SFDPA, the DPDA, the rural small scale industries and other such development programmes wherever applicable. In this way the Voluntary Organisations involved can develop their Adult Education programmes in such a way that the contents include functional literacy and training related to the economic development programme, existing in that area.

2) Rigid targets for Banks to provide Bank loans under the Differential Interest Rate scheme to Illiterate Landless Labourers should be initiated.

3) The Deposit or marginal stake for taking Bank loans should be reduced from 25% to 10% for illiterate Landless Labourers. In this way only those who have accounts in the bank can avail of bank loans, and an individual with Rs. 10/- in the bank can get a loan of Rs.100/-.

4) For landless illiterate poor there should be uniformly a system of chain security where one beneficiary stands security for another and vice versa.

Having introduced the function of Bank accounts and Bank loans would entail a minimal Education of simple mathematics, counting numbers, home accounts and simple calculations for day to day transactions.

The next stage would be adult eduction and training for the function for which the bank loan is taken. As an illustration we will take Dairy Management where a landless illiterate individual has taken the Bank loan far purchase of a cow. Dairy management can be related to Health and practically all other components of adult education. The comparison is given here.

1. Care of a pregnant cow.	Antenatal care of a women.
2. Care of a calf.	Care of a child.
3. Fodder.	Nutrition of a pregnant mother and of a child.
4. Immunisation of a cow and calf.	Immunisation of mother and child.
5. Diseases due to bad sanitation.	Diseases in humans due to uncleanliness.
6. Milk and its value.	Nutrition of a child.

7. Economic management—purchase of cow and sale of—ability to read and write etc.	Home accounts ability to read and write etc.

In this way adult education revolves around the training in a Home based income generating unit whether it is Dairy, Agriculture or small scale industries.

The second issue is to develop a methodology. The idea of developing a methodology is relevant only if that particular methodology as it is or with modifications can be applied to a large geographical area. Each project holder has to finally modify and change the suggested methodology to suit his area.

One such suggested methodology which can be replicated all over this country is being experimented by our study group.

Five lakh village Dais are being trained all over India under the Basic Health Care programme. Almost uniformly these women are uneducated and from the lowest socio-economic background. They can be given adult education and used as catalysts or motivates in their village to arouse the interest of other women.

Similarly another five lakh semi-educated women from villages are being trained as Community Health Workers. Each Community Health Worker could be made the Adult Education Instructor in her village. In this way a core group will have been formed in all villages of village based illiterate women ready to motivate other women to undergo adult literacy and a set of semi-educated women from the same villages who could provide this education. As in health our experience in other fields of education and awarness is that the rural community is far more resistant to suggestions from someone outside their community. Here the Community Health Worker is a village women and the Dai a live demonstration, of the advantages and merits of Adult Education. Invariably the resistance to new awareness is because of conflicting values of the educators from outside and the illiterate community in the village. As often the reaction of the so called development workers or educators to this conflict in values is defined as "These lazy good

for nothing villagers".

Unless their values are considered and their needs fulfilled an adult education programme for rural illiterate women will not be successful.

The final aim and objective of the Adult Education programme should rightly be defined as awareness and education to bring about socio-economic development unless the programme right from its inception is meant to institutionalise illiteracy and poverty for providing more jobs to the literate unemployed.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CONTENT OF LITERACY EDUCATION FOR WOMEN SPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS

Anasuya Limaye

Aim of Education is ultimately the development of the individual as well as of the village or the society as a whole. When we speak of Adult Education, we know that women form the largest section, the hard core of the illiterates in India. The social and religious traditions have kept women illiterate, backward and timid. Women, especially in villages, excluding only those of the rich landowners' families have since very old days striving hard for life, working on the farm as well as in the house, looking after the hearth as well as the children. Most of them are productive members of the family but they do not get the same rights in the family or in the society as the man gets. Village men, after their day's work is over, participate in the community life, play games, enjoy life, spend their own income on the hobbies of their liking. Not only that but they spoil their income in drinking, addictions and other bad habits. But women, when they come home, they have to look after the house, the children and do the cleaning and cooking work and other routine. They hardly get time to enjoy. Neither the women nor the men expect that women should enjoy because 'after all they are women'.

We have to think of these conditions of the village women when we start adult education programme for the rural women.

The motivation of the NAEP programme is to create awareness and awaken a taste for knowledge, to awaken the spirit in the individual, awaken his inquistiveness for searching the meaning of his or her life. The illiterate man's or woman's aspiration to live a meaningful life, a richer and a fuller life.

Contents of Literacy Education

In order to sketch out the contents of literacy education for rural women, we must first understand the life that the rural women is living, understand her problems, her difficulties and the woman should feel that the education is about her own problems. She must take interest in it.

The class teacher or the organiser has to start with talks, dialogues, conversation. Ask the name of the woman, about her family, about the work. The woman should be inspired, should be given encouragement to talk, to be free from fear and answer the questions. Once she gets confidence, she will speak out her mind and will respond. Teaching words and sentences will follow then.

Water, Fuel the Earnest Needs

One of the earnest problems of the village woman is getting water. Especially in summer days in many villages, woman has to walk a mile or two every day in search of water. Has she any consciousness of this drudgery? Does she ever think or envy the city woman who gets water from the tap ? Does she get tired ? Is there nobody in the house to share this world ? Is it not possible to bring taps in her village ? All these points are talked about and the woman's interest is roused.

In some Projects women were found complaining that the people in other villages are not willing to give their daughters in marriage to the bridegrooms of their village because the girl should not face this drudgery of water. Some women of the city slums spoke out that collecting water often creates quarrels and spoils the atmosphere. Sometimes in villages, women have to cross through lands of other owners and again the complaints are raised.

Another question is fuel. The village woman if she is near a forest, has to take efforts to collect fuel. Does she find it too hard to find the fuel ? Would she not like to have a stove ? If the interest is roused the teacher can also speak about the solar energy, the solar cooker, the free energy or heat of the sun which is

wasted in our country. Some experiements on the low cost solar cookers will certainly create interest. Team spirit is also roused.

After some talks and conversation, when interest is roused and when women come to the class, writing and reading should be introduced.

Writing the woman's name, names of the family members will also be subject of interest. To be able to write or read one's own name is certainly an achievement.

There are no latrines in most of the villages. Woman should be asked whether they feel ashamed ? Whether they would like to have latrines, whether they have formed a habit of going only when it gets dark or before the day breaks ?

2. **Children**

Children is of course a subject which the woman would love to speak about. Children's names, their schooling, their habits etc. Where do the women keep their young children when they go to work on the field or in the forest ? Or on the road or dam side? The reply would be mostly that their older-children especially the daughters stay home to look after the young children. Then we can ask : Do they like that sons and daughters don't go to school ? Did they ever think of any outlet ? Do they know about free and compulsory education ? Do they not want their children to grow clever, smart ? Examples of creches, Balwadis run in cities or bigger towns can be cited. Is it not possible to have a creche or a balwadi in their village?

3. **Food**

What food the women prepare in the family ? What is the staple food ? What do they give their children ? Do they get milk ? Talk about nutritive food. Inspite of poverty, they can give some nutritive food to their children. Raw vegetables, eggs, mixing of two grains are some ways. Over boiling, over cooking spoils the strength. In continuation of this the teacher can talk about vitamins, food values, nutrition etc. The village woman can be

encouraged to grow some vegetables in the space outside their house.

Words and sentences like the names of the cereals, vegetables fruit, egg. etc. can be introduced along with this talk.

4. Health and Hygiene

Then we come to the question of health and hygiene. Talking affectionately and asking about the health of the woman and her family members will certainly create close relations. Children's common illness like worms, diarriah, cough, skin diseases are caused by malnutrition and unhygienic conditions. Imparting this knowledge is very important.

Superstitions count a lot in this field. Village people believe in the Deorishis, Bhagat, Vaidus and such other religious customs so they will avoid going to the doctor till the last moment. It is not easy to give the scientific outlook. I have experienced that the Adivasi children and also their mothers used to hide somewhere when they learned the doctor or the health visitor was coming. After some months of work among them we were successful in taking away their fear.

The teacher is expected to bring a doctor or nurse to give lectures on this question and if possible to arrange about the check ups of the village people by the adjacent Government Health Centre, if any.

Woman is always neglected member of the family as regards health. She has always suffered. But she is the mother of the children. So at least for the sake of children she must not neglect her health. That training is to be imparted.

The village woman is also to be given the knowledge about the physiology. She must know the working of the whole body. This education can be effective by films, pictures, charts etc. Words and sentences about the parts of the body can be taught at this stage.

5. Family Planning

Family planning is another important subject. The subject has touched many villages, but still 6-7 children in a family is a common scene. A heart to heart talk, examples of a planned family and a family with too many children will serve the purpose better. Customs, traditions and religious superstitions come as an obstacle. Here it is that we have to turn to the science side of our education. For years and years the superstitions have gone deep to the hearts and stuck there. There the way of handling is more important. Through conversation let the woman herself say that she does not want more children and then the question should be handled. Proverbs and education saying like "Hum Do, Hamare Do" "Few children bring sweetness in the home"—which are perhaps painted on the walls of the dispensary or the school, let the women read and take joy. Films on planned families can be an interesting feature.

6. Men's Vicious Habits

Men's vicious habits like drinking, addictedness spoil the atmosphere of the home. This is a common sight in villages. The family is drowned both morally and financially. It is the woman and the children who suffer. Women are beaten by their drunk husbands. Children are scared. They get shocks on their tender minds. Women suffer all this thinking that after all they are "Women", thinking that the husbands have a right to beat the wives and the wives must suffer. But then life becomes difficult. But now women are being awakened. In an inauguration function of an adult education in a slum, after the function was over a woman rushed to the stage, cried and said 'this is all right what you say—but tell me what should I do. My husband drinks and does not give any money in the house. Today I had earned two rupees. I wanted to bring food for the children, but my husband seized them from my hands." In many of the slums and especially among the Adivsasis, women also drink but hardly find a woman who is drunk too much and forgets about her duties towards her children. After we started work among the Adivasis we had good experience.

Some of the women whom we gave work in our Centres stopped preparing illicit wine in the house. In the Conference we had of the Adivasi women passed a resolution demanding work so that they can stop preparing wine.

The Adivasis women of Dulia District after the work of the Sarvoday people formed an organisation and whenever a man came drunk and beat his wife, all of them would gherao that hut and would drive away the man asking him not to come to the house unless he is in normal condition. That was certainly effective. Such examples can be cited in the class so that women will find an outlet and gain confidence.

7. **Social Conditions**

The custom of taking dowry and spending varaciously in marriage is increasing. Parents are worried about the marriage of their daughters. Even educated girls have to face the same situation. By talks, conversation, citing examples, we have to change these customs. Woman should give up the concept that she is subordinate and the man is above her. She should be taught to think that she is a human being first and has more common with the man-parts of body as well as mind, brain, and therefore she is not subordinate. Nature has made man and woman as supplementary to each other so that human species should survive. Research made by Margaret Mead show how woman if brought up in equal circumstances can have the same qualities and strength that a man has.

Muslim women have not yet got justice as the Muslim shariat laws are not changed and the Jabani Talaq brings a woman always an unsteady life.

Injustice done to women, cases of rape, beating, harassing by the mother-in-law or the husband—all these subjects should be tackled during heart to heart conversations.

8. **Organization—Mahila Mandal**

When once the awareness and the consciousness is awakened women start thinking. How to do away with the injustice ? How

to reform or change the condition ? They themselves left alone still feel weak. The answer then can be given to them—They must come together. Number gains strength. Organised group can fight effectively. There must be a Mahila Mandal in the village. Women in the class must be its members. At the end of the 10 months curriculum, the women of the class should have the idea of forming a Mandal of their own—through which they will have a Balwadi, a creche, an Adult Education Library. They can study, they can learn handicrafts, start some workshop, strive for their rights, and also strive to have better condition for their children. The Mandal can get itself registered, so that they can obtain grants. They can also raise their voice against rising prices, against artificial shortage of daily commodities etc.

9. Laws

Women should know family laws, laws of equal wage for equal work, factory act, special benefits like delivery leave, creche etc.

They should also be given a knowledge about various institutions or departments that are established for the welfare of women and children.

10. Representation in Local Bodies

Women should then be brought to the conclusion that they should have representation in the village panchayat to put forward their grievances, their demands. The representatives should not only be dolls, but be active, study the conditions, lead the organisations and if need be fight against injustice.

That leaves us in a position that even if the class is over, there is a permanent organisation which will take care of the literate women, which will give them outlets to continue their reading and writing, thinking, and acting so that literacy does not again fall into illiteracy.

11. Supplementary Work

If the teacher, with the help of the Government officials, social workers, bankers, can help the women to start some supplemen-

tary small scale industry, like poultry, piggery, cattle breading, handicrafts, bamboo work, cane work and the like nothing better than that to continue the mandal.

Social Customs, Holidays, Folklore, etc.

Studying the social and cultural customs, the folk songs, folklore of the rural class, the holidays that are celebrated will help the teacher to go closer to the women. Dialogues and conversations can bring the women to new ideas, modern outlook in observing the days. Along with these they can be asked to observe national holidays like the Independence day, the Republic day etc.

These are some of the items, ways and means which will show us the guidelines for the contents of literacy education of adult women—specially in rural areas. Adult education literature can be written on the basis of these contents. Charts can be prepared. Pictures, cards, also will help. The only thing that counts is how the teacher is successful in creating the 'awareness and inculcate liking for knowledge. This will impart not only the three R's but also help to develop a new woman, a new citizen who thinks not only for herself, but also for her family, for her village.

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CONTENT OF LITERACY EDUCATION FOR WOMEN SPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS

U.S. Wali

The position of Indian women is unique as compared to other countries. Here women seem to have better participation at the highest levels of leadership and decision making with confidence and success. Though the number of such women is very small, but it gives the evidence that if rural illiterate women are also trained for liberation and status seeking they can prove very rewarding for the society and their families. The biological characteristics in a woman bestow her with special quality of emotional needs and expressions. These qualities when supplemented with proper knowledge and direction go a long way to make women better adaptable to social stresses.

Rural Women as Labourer—Division of Labour according to sex is often explained as a natural result of psychological and phyShique difference between men and women. But different situations exist in different countries. To be an independent farmer is male task in India but in many regions of Europe it is a normal occupation of women to own account and perform all the manual labour needed on a plot of land without any male assistance. It is customary in all primitive communities to redicule and despise men who perform female tasks and women who perform male tasks. The women should be endowed with such information and knowledge so that customary division of labour is not perpetuated as social sanction. In modern times when economic development is moving out from home and occupations are being transferred into specialised tasks, both men and women would have to supplement each other in home as well as out of it. To improve the economy of the family, production has to be expanded. Women should

understand that if larger quantities are produced for sale, changes must necessarily interfere with the customary division of labour within the family. Increased workload may need help from the other sex. If women refuse to work, the men shall have to burden disproportionate share of work or vice versa.

In labour market even when vocational qualifications of men and women are similar, women are often given less wages and are employed on inferior jobs. As a result many women do not take up occupation and limit themselves to domestic work only, perpetuating the traditional pattern of one earner, poor families with many children.

The contents of literacy programme should include concrete examples of women role in economic development.

Self employment for women—Literacy content for women should be oriented for self employment. Knowledge regarding setting up of home industries will be useful. Government agencies and semi-government ones encourage small home industries to boost family income. Women with some education and initiative can enable themselves to start home industries. Women in a village can also get together and spend their otherwise free hours working at the joi- .y set up industry.

Maintenance and managing of accounts of home industries does not involve much complication. Knowledge of keeping simple accounts can also be included in the literacy contents.

Women can prove better entrepreneurs. There are many agencies which can help for setting up home industry and may be referred e.g. Small Industries Services Institutes, Small Scale Industries Commission (Ministry of Education), District Industries Centres, Extension Services, Indian Social Institute, Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

Thus motivated women can also try to use their spare time in home for making pickles, soap etc. and in this way can make their home work pay.

Legal Knowledge—Though there had been considerable legislation for protection of women rights, in reality the position of women today is not much improved. Women have to be made independent economically, socially and psychologically. Legislation enacted in last three decades are out of reach of most women. Mental awareness to take advantage of these provisions is lacking.

Women have to be made aware of that reservations provided for in favour of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes are not overlooked in case of women candidates.

Literacy contents should throw light on the available legal provisions for women to help them attain proper social status. It should also provoke discussions on other issues like liberalising abortion laws etc.

Emergence of women as independent social and economic beings should be the top most priority of Adult Education Programme. We should make efforts to raise their status in this direction by imparting them right knowledge.

CONTENT OF FOLLOW-UP LITERATURE FOR NEO-LITERATE WOMEN

Sharda Jain

The Adult Education Programme envisages to open the floodgates of knowledge to the illiterates. Once these gates are thrown open, the gushing waters of knowledge are to be channelised and crystalised through meaningful, relevant, easy to understand literature specially suited to the needs of the neo-literates. Let the writers of neo-literate keep reminding themselves that only such knowledge be imparted as would be understood or grasped by the neo-literates and which would make their lives more self-satisfying.

The post-literacy and follow-up programmes should enable the learners to reinforce their literacy, gain a more critical understanding of the environment and help them in becoming aware of the ways in which they can utilise different Government and non-Government schemes for their betterment. The post-literacy programmes have to be a part of a continuous process of education leading to action and action needing further education.

What will the neo-literates like to read ? The obvious answer is – what interests them. Their interests however, will vary from person to person, vocation to vocation and will depend on the environment and the local needs. Broadly speaking, literature for the neo-literates should cover the following content areas :

1. The neo-literate as an economic person—catering to her economic needs. Employment and vocational development.
2. The neo-literate as a housholder—serving her daily needs. Home and family Life, Health and Sanitation, Nutrition.
3. The neo-literate as a grown up Individual-fulfilling her social and cultural needs. Entertainment.

4. The neo-literate as a citizen; Individual and Society—Her Social, Environmental and Civic Orientation.

Based on the broad and general categories listed above, special literature for women could be formulated on the following topics :—

I. Becoming aware of the home and family life situation; learning about preparations necessary for marriage and parenthood: the 'why' and 'how' of family planning, Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act.

II. Maternity and Child-Care, common ailments and diseases of children, communicable diseases and first-aid and home nursing; immunisation.

III. Personal Health and Hygiene; Keeping home and surroundings clean; learning proper methods of disposal of waste water, household refuse, human excreta, animal dung.

IV. Nutrition and health; basic groups of food; cheap nutritious substitutes available locally; nutritional deficiency diseases and methods to prevent them. Balanced diet for infants and expectant mothers.

V. Social awareness—rights and duties of a citizen; legislation regarding women—Hindu Succession Act, Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, Hindu Minority and Guardianship Act.

VI. Home Management—good house keeping, improvement in Kitchen and family budgeting; care of clothes, washing and storage of grain and other food stuff; food preservation.

VII. Needs of growing children with relation to health, nutrition, education, recreation, social behaviour and formation of habits.

VIII. Stitching, Embroidery and Knitting—garments for children and ladies, articles of daily use.

IX. Bhajans. Songs for special occasions, Short plays on social evils like untouchability, dowry, illiteracy.

X. Developmental Programmes and local welfare agencies; working of post office, hospitals, banks etc.

XI. Income generating projects like poultry, piggery, bee-keeping and cottage industries like match making, soap making and candles, etc.

XII. Entertainment material—Stories, poems, puzzles do-it-yourself crafts, etc.

The neo-literates are like other grown up individuals and their needs/interests are equally varied. Content alone of follow up literature is not important. Equally or perhaps more important is the style and the presentation of the material. Short, question-answer or dialogue form explanations illustrated with suitable pictures go well with the neo-literates. What is needed is a simple, easy to understand, wholesome and attractive kind of literature.

Our aim is to make the home-maker a better manager of her resources, make her aware of her duties, rights and responsibilities and help her to assess and utilise her resources effectively and aspire to improve her status. The major areas for which enriching content of follow-up literature is to be developed are the physical environment and the social environment. The physical environment consists of health, hygiene, sanitation, housing, nutrition and some aspects of managerial education for farm and home improvement. Social environment covers family life, civic consciousness, religious goals and values in life.

Follow-up literature should educate the women to make wise decisions. It should make available knowledge of resources and impart the technical skills to utilise them well. Women, specially in the rural areas, discharge a two-fold responsibility—in the home and on the farm. Better farming techniques must be imparted so as to make the women in agriculture perform better.

To involve the vast masses of illiterates and the neo-literates in the process of social change and development, attempt has to be made to broaden their outlook, influence their belief-structure and modify their attitude pattern. Through the various communication media, of which the print media is most effective, we should aim at reducing the conservatism, rigidity in attitudes and behaviour and resistance to change.

ORGANISATION, TECHNIQUE AND DEVELOPMENT OF FOLLOW-UP LITERATURE FOR WOMEN

Kamla Rana

The underprivileged, educationally disadvantaged and oppressed, particularly women in rural areas have begun to show signs of dissatisfaction in most developing countries. A modern liberal society like in India, based on democratic principles, and preaching equality for men and women cannot afford to neglect the education of women if social and economic progress with equality of opportunity is our national goal. It is not going to be enough to give women some competence of 3 R's without a proper follow-up of their reading and writing skills. How else can they improve their communication skills for a better future? Reading and writing efficiency followed by appropriate follow-up material, guided programmed reading still remain the basic tools women can use to develop their skills in developing countries like India.

The overall development of woman has to be linked with her education and her economic well being. There is an obvious relationship between income and an improvement in self reliance. In the first place the woman should be able to improve and contribute more effectively to the basic needs of her family in areas like better health, nutrition, etc. In the second place a growing and important need visualised by modern social scientists and adult educators, but more significantly expressed by women themselves, is the need for women to be in the mainstream of development. Field experience and recent studies show that they would like to avail of all opportunities for a better home and come out of their homes and be able to also independently work outside the home.

Even the first skill—to enable women to satisfy their role in the

family more effectively and participate actively in the decision-making process at all levels is not an achievement, assuming that their educational programmes are very carefully planned and executed. But even if we look at the present programmes in adult education for women in India, we see little that makes them acquire a new independent image. Women no doubt play an important pivotal role in the family, but their literacy training only more than reaches the initial skills of 3 R's which fades away with non-use after a lapse of a year or so. By then the attention of the organisers has shifted elsewhere.

The second strategy for women's role is intended to foster their economic independence and integration into community life beyond the family. This is indeed the present day need, and the extension of her role as a part of the development process. How do we hope to bring about this change? Can a woman, by learning economic skills like craft, tailoring, weaving, or poultry, become capable of forging ahead with her economic independence with the requisite confidence without further development of literacy skills? There are gaps visible in the present programme for women particularly in rural areas, where functional literacy programmes have been organised.

There are several reasons for these gaps but for purposes of this paper it is important to lay stress on the following :

1. The Adult Education programmes for women generally cover the basic instructional material book, with some visuals and demonstrations in health and nutrition. At the end of the course, the participants are supposed to have acquired sufficient skills to read and write independentely and be on their own. They are labelled as new—literates. The tests given to them prove some knowledge and skill in reading and writing but they have not mastered comprehension for further reading material which nearly always happens to be of a high standard.

2. Women are thus left at a stage of learning ability from where they cannot take off on their own, and be educationally

independent to read newspapers, select material they want to read and write with precision.

3. There is no concerted effort to make Adult Education programmes for women effectively linked with development plans, and help them to be absorbed in the main stream of national life. Literacy skill which is not sufficient for women to become indep dent in a short time, educational programmes in health, sanitation, nutrition, etc. are geared to promote the status of women. What we do not plan is how women can go into more difficult technical and more remunerative competitive employment instead of only carrying on with one or two limited skills they learn in a functional literacy programme. If women concentrate on craft learning only, it becomes an end in itself, without helping them find access to other more potential lines of production. They are more or less circumscribed by these limited skills and deprived of an opportunity to forge ahead as agents of social and economic change.

Why does this happen in most women's projects? A major drawback is the insufficient planning on a long-term basis for a comprehensive educational programme, lack of appropriate material, written, audio-visual and better access to materials which would generate new ideas and future outcome.

What kind of adult education programmes should we plan so that these glaring gaps are filled? Since rural women constitute the largest single group neglected so far this paper is confined to development of a comprehensive strategy for them.

What is the strategy of follow-up material for women? How should it be prepared?

Basic instructional material is generally based on the felt needs of the prospective learners. The learning material is developed keeping in view their vital daily concerns, interests and needs. Scientifically, all instructional material is developed with the help of field workers, writers, adult

educators, linguists and artists. This is done after a need assessment survey of the target group and technical assistance from subject-matter specialists. The process to be followed for developing material for neo-literates also needs to be especially evolved. It must be as carefully developed as basic instructional material.

First of all, instructional material should be developed beyond the basic primer. In a project Evaluation Study in Madhya Pradesh, the rural women learnt literacy, knowledge of subjects like health, hygiene, nutrition, home management, child care utilization of available service. The organiser of the programme discovered that inspite of a carefully executed programme and training for teachers, the gains of the functional literacy programme were short lived and immediate.

Following findings of the report of an integrated project indicate a functional literacy/family life education as far literacy achievements are concerned.

Literacy Status of Respondents

	Benca Mark Survey		Final Evaluation	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Literate	15	5.42	200	87.34
Illiterate	262	94.58	29	12.66
	277	200.00	229	100.00

There is a very marked change in the state of literacy. The number of illiterates dropped from 94.58 to 12.66 and there is a corresponding increase in the number of literates from 5.42 percent to 87.34 percent. This definitely shows the impact of the project on the respondents.

Data processed in the Evaluation Study show that subjects like

education, literacy, health, home management, nutrition and mother craft were liked by the respondents. They were however unable to grasp the follow-up books developed after careful consideration of their needs by an expert Team of writers and technical consultants. The reason was their need for some more bridge material to enable them to understand fully the meaning and message of the type of materials neo-literates are expected to read.

The voluntary organisation realised, through intensive discussions with learning groups and a quick study of the needs of these learners, that they cannot read follow-up material with comprehension find it difficult in terms of its presentation and style, and do not relate it to their needs. This happened inspite of the writers' and the technical consultants writing what they found to be of interest to the learners.

The gap between the last lesson of the primer, the second set of material and the new set of books developed was felt by the participants themselves. This was an eye opener and helped everyone think again. On the basis of the findings of a short study, their learning interests and other studies, it was decided to develop two further instructional books to be learnt by the same groups in a literacy centre with the help of the teacher followed by discussions to be initiated by learners themselves. Women would otherwise relapse into illiteracy, unless helped at this stage to retain that they have learnt. The objectives of the project therefore were extended to improve the reading and writing proficiency of the learner. According to a study conducted by Dr. J.M. Kapoor and Dr. Prodipto Roy in the villages near Lucknow such neo-literates should "get more focussed and intensive learning in order to ensure retention of literacy skills". This can be achieved only when literacy level of women have reached level IV equivalent to Grade IV of formal school. Two books at levels III and IV have been developed. There is a better comprehension, reading speed with accurate pronunciations and general feeling of self confidence with further instructional material made available. Teachers are spending time to help learners overcome their difficulties.

2. Secondly, supervised reading programme should be organised with each Adult Education programme with a problem-solving approach. Not every learner learns with the same speed, accuracy and comprehension even at the neo-literate level. Materials developed for learners should be made available for self-reading and problems encountered solved by teachers. This supervised reading will help solve problems of understanding by neo-literates.

3. An equally critical issue often lost sight of is the fact that writers of material for neo-literates are not familiar with the specific target groups for whom they are writing; their needs and levels of general comprehension. It is therefore very necessary that all those involved with preparation and presentation of written, wall paper journals for adults and audio-visual materials including film, radio-programmes, and TV presentations should be familiar with the target group. Only then will follow-up material have any significance in the lives of neo-literates. Only then will they want to continue to learn.

4. The strategy of material preparation for neo-literates thus must be on proper scientific lines. It needs field studies for target groups, a real interest among writers and organisers of adult education programmes. It is also a continuous process.

Continuing education through curriculum and material development

The next important component in effective learning through materials is linking continuing education for rural programmes with basic instructional programmes of literacy. This means :

1. Development of basic illustrated learning material after careful assessment of learners' needs.
2. Preparation of bridge-material upto level IV of instructional material, corresponding to Grade IV of formal school.
3. Preparation of follow-up material by writers familiar with the development needs of women so as to enable them to become active partners in the national develop-

ment by acquiring efficiency in their life and work through use of these materials.

4. Cultivating reading habits through rural libraries that cater to the needs and aspirations of rural women and encouraging neo-literates.

The follow-up literature must be available to readers in villages. The NAEP Centres can establish small libraries and reading rooms after class hours. Women should be encouraged to read material developed for them, giving them food for thought, analysis and decision making for their own benefit. Women, e.g. would read a cookery book for recipes, learn new knitting patterns, follow sewing instructions, read story books, magazines, newspapers to increase knowledge, gain new information and indeed improve their perception and mental development. They should know their country and its developmental plans, and decide where they can fit in.

Self reliance among women and income generating programmes can be successful only if all aspects of their training and learning new skills is processed through the simultaneous preparation of new follow-up material they can refer to as and when they need. Leaving them in the neo-literate stage, as most women are after the completion of a programme without any plan for helping them solve their future needs is the least adult educators can do.

The necessary follow-up material, establishment of libraries, supervised reading sessions followed by discussions, will simultaneously enable organisers of such programmes to know and record the changing and growing needs of women as agents of change.

The Central Social Welfare Board sponsors and gives financial assistance to middle and higher secondary level condensed courses. These have proved to be very popular and young girls in the age group 12 to 16 are seen attending these courses. Their parents want them to get a middle or high school certificate. These young learners do well in their examination. Unfortunately there

are only a few students eligible for condensed courses. It is important, therefore, to provide a Third Unit in the form of a non-formal condensed course to prepare young women to enter the formal course in education without dropping out from non-formal education course for the primary level. In essence this would serve two purposes. In the first place it would prevent the problem of drop outs by giving an incentive for higher learning. In the second place it will link non-formal education with formal education, at a critical point.

Another possibility worth exploring would be to develop condensed courses in non-formal education parallel to the formal but with the same recognition as the formal. In either case, the learners will stand to gain. The third major benefit such a course development with suitable material will give the women is the opportunity to continue in the stream of education, development of faculties and thought process without any effort and without a break.

The process of materials development for follow-up and continuing education needs a scientific and technological base. Each state can assign this work to a team of writers with vision and creative ability who should develop and test materials before publishing them. Writers are supposed to feel the pulse of the readers and can really reach the target groups. Adult Education organisation with specialised skills in material development need to be identified and given the task of promoting the programme in the field. Since time is of essence, it is obviously a continuous process and not an exercise to be gone through in a writers' workshop only.

The existing technical competence of these organisations may also have to be strengthened with trained writers, linguists, artists, etc. Similarly continuous feed back from present readers should be recorded and considered before a set of new materials is developed. Selected research organisations can be given this part of the work. The State Resource Centres could give assistance to these agencies.

The modern school of thought on Adult Education in many parts of the world are advocating economic programmes to be the starting point through skill learning, particularly in women's programmes, supported by field experiments. It is, nevertheless, an equally essential component of the development process to steer the potential of women into the centre of history, geography, demography, national integration, cultural heritage, science and technology. Why should they remain only on the outer fringes of Adult Education ?

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महिलाओं में प्रौढ़ शिक्षा

मालती देवी चौधरी

महात्मा गांधी के अठारह रचनात्मक कार्यक्रमों में से प्रौढ़ शिक्षा एक प्रमुख कार्यक्रम था। देहात में रचनात्मक काम करने वाले स्वयं सेवक शाम को लालटेन लेकर निकल पड़ते थे। गाँव के बीच किसी एक जगह पर बैठकर बड़ी उम्र के गांव वालों को इकट्ठा करके अक्षर परिचय कराने। उसमें आयु का फरक के लिए चिन्ता नहीं करनी पड़ती। उस जमाने में देहात में विद्यालयों का बहुत अभाव था। बहुत विरले ही स्त्रियाँ इस रात्रि पाठशाला में शरीक होती थी। अपने देश में क्या हिन्दु क्या मुसलिम सभी समाज में अर्थनैतिक स्थिति के कारण पर्दा या घुघंट की रिवाज थी, आज भी कुछ हद तक है। मेहनत मजदूरी करने वाली महिलाओं में यह रिवाज नहीं थी और आज भी नहीं है। नारी-स्वतंत्रता भी इन लोगों की सम्पन्न घराने की स्त्रियों से बहुत ज्यादा है यह निर्विवाद से कहा जा सकता है।

समाज को करीबन चार वर्ग में विभाजित किया जाता है - धनवान, उच्च मध्यवर्ग, निम्न मध्यवर्ग एवं गरीब मजदूर वर्ग। धनवान स्त्रियों में साक्षरता के प्रसार के बारे में खास कोई सवाल ही नहीं उठता था। परिवार में उच्च शिक्षा प्राप्त भाई बाबा, काका आदि के प्रवास से उन लोगों में भी शिक्षा का प्रसार हो जाता था। इसी तरह उच्च-मध्य वर्ग के स्त्रियों में साक्षरता ज्ञान भागवत, रामायण आदि धर्मग्रन्थ पढ़ने तक सीमित था। लड़की धर्मग्रन्थ पढ़ना जान गई तो वह बहुत कुछ पढ़ चुकी ऐसा सन्तोष मानती थी और उसके माता पिता नाना नानी आदि उससे भी ज्यादा खुश होते थे। उसी तरह मुसलमानों के मध्यमवर्ग और गरीब परिवार के महिलाऐं प्रायः कुरान पढ़ लेने की योग्यता हासिल कर ली तो बहुत शिक्षा पा लिया ऐसा मान लेते थे। अतः देखने में आता है कि एक जमाना ऐसा था जब महिलाऐं धर्मग्रन्थ या कुरान शरीफ पढ़ने के लिये उद्‌बुध् होकर अक्षर ज्ञान हासल करती थी। इससे ज्यादा ज्ञान लाभ की अभिलाषा बहुत ही कम महिलाओं

में पाया जाता। आजादी के बाद एक नया जमाने का सूत्रपात हुआ। धीरे-धीरे कुछ नई समस्याओं ने देहाती समाज में प्रवेश किया। आजादी के इस ३०-३२ साल के भीतर भारत का सामाजिक एवं आर्थिक समस्या ज्यादा पेंचीदा होने लगा, आबादी बढ़ने के साथ साथ भारत के आर्थिक स्थिति में भी संकट पैदा हुई। निम्न-मध्यमवर्ग के पुरुष लोग अपनी कमाई से बड़ा परिवार का गुजारा करने में असमर्थ रहे। उपार्जनक्षम लोगों की वृद्धि नहीं होगी तो संसार चलेगा कैसे ? इसरे धीरे-धीरे किशोरी युवती व बड़ी आयु की महिलाएँ थोड़ा बहुत बौधिक ज्ञान हासिल करके परिवार की आर्थिक विषमता मिटाने के लिऐ निकली पड़ी नौकरी करने। जिन बहिनों ने बिलकुल नहीं पढ़ी थी वे भी जैसे तैसे तीसरी चौथी तक पढ़ लिखकर गांव के विद्यालय में मदर-टिचर के तौरपर नियुक्ति पाने के लिऐ लालायित हो उठी।

एक जमाना ऐसा था जब धर्मग्रन्थ या कुरान शरीफ पढ़ने के लिऐ औरतें शिक्षा प्राप्त करने के लिए उत्साहित होती थी। जब कि आज आर्थिक अभाव मिटाने के लिऐ साक्षरता हासिल करने की प्रेरणा पाती है। उन लोगों की संख्या भी २०-२५ प्रतिशत से ज्यादा नहीं। परन्तु जो ज्यादा मेहनत मजदूरी करने वाली गरीब महिलाएं जिनकी काफी बड़ी तादाद इस देश में है उन्हें साक्षर बनाने में कैसे प्रेरित किया जाय यह एक विकट सवाल है।

सिर्फ ज्ञान लाभ की दृष्टि से बच्चों से बूढ़ों तक को साक्षर बनाने में प्रेरित करने के लिऐ कुछ हद तक देशात्मबोध की भावना और गरीब पिछड़े हुए वर्ग को ऊपर उठाने की महत्वाकांक्षा जागृत करना चाहिऐ। यह देश और यह समाज अपना है और इस देश का भविष्य निर्माण हमारे हाथ में है ऐसी भावना स्त्री-पुरुष दोनों में पैदा न हुई तो प्रौढ़ शिक्षा कार्यक्रम असफल रह जायेगा। रूस, चीन, जापान आदि देश में और अफ्रिका के पिछड़े हुए देशों में भी अपने देश का सर्वविध उन्नति के रास्ते पर ले जाने के लिऐ काफी महत्वाकांक्षा रखकर लड़के लड़कियों के साथ बैठकर बड़ी आयु के यहां तक कि बड़े बूढ़े लोग भी अक्षर ज्ञान हासिल करते देखे गए हैं।

समाज द्वारा शोषित निरपेक्षित जनता चाहे वह स्त्री हो या पुरुष शिक्षा प्राप्ति द्वारा उनका शोषण दूर हो सकेगा और उसपे समाज आगे बढ़ सकेगा ऐसी विचारधारा ही गरीब महिलाओं को पढ़ने में उत्साहित कर सकेगा। यह विचारधारा

एक क्रान्ति का रूप लेगा तो ही प्रौढ़ शिक्षा सफल हो सकेगा। ऐसी क्रान्तिकारी संगठन गांव गांव में समाज सेविकाओं के द्वारा आरम्भ हो जाना चाहिए।

गरीब और मजदूर वर्ग के स्त्रियों को प्रौढ़ शिक्षा देने में उत्साहित करने के लिये कुछ सुझाव :—

१. महिलाओं में देशात्मबोध भावना, समाज में उनकी अपनी एक विशेष भूमिका और समाज को आगे बढ़ाने के लिए उनकी छिपी हुई शक्ति के बारे में चेतना देने के लिये अच्छी समाज सेविकाओं का एक मजबूत संगठन खड़ी करना।

२. जिन फैक्ट्री कारखाने या खानों में स्त्रियां काम करती हैं उसी फैक्ट्री या खादानों के अहाते अथवा नजदीक कहीं कारखानों के समय में से एकाध घंटे इन महिलाओं के लिऐ फैक्ट्री आदि की तरफ से प्रौढ़ शिक्षा वर्ग की व्यवस्था।

३. खेती मजदूरी या जंगल में मेहनत करने वाली बहिनों के लिए छोटी-छोटी टुकड़ियों में गांव के मोहल्ले में प्रौढ़ शिक्षा वर्ग चलाने की व्यवस्था।

४. मेहनतकश बहिनों को हमेशा दोहरा काम करना पड़ता है। अतः उनके परिवार में जैसी वातावरण पैदा की जाय कि काम से लौटने के बाद शाम को खाना पकाना या दूसरे काम से उस महिला को साक्षरता प्राप्ति के लिए एक.ध घंटा मुक्ति मिले।

५. आज जिस पद्धति से प्रौढ़ शिक्षा चल रहा है वह सिर्फ प्याच डालने का काम कहा जा सकता है। यह कार्यक्रम आज हर एक गांव की बात तो अलग रही हरेक जिला को भी स्पर्श नहीं कर सका है। जिस ढंग से और रफ्तार से यह काम चल रहा है उससे हजारों साल में भी निरक्षता दूर नहीं हो सकेगी। हर एक गांव और हर एक अनपढ़ व्यक्ति को साक्षर बनाने के लिए आज की प्रौढ़ शिक्षा पद्धति नाकामयाबी होगी—सारा राजकोष खर्च करने पर भी।

जैसे दीपक से दीपक जलाया जाता है वैसे हर एक शिक्षित व्यक्ति देश के लिए, समाज के लिए इतना फर्ज अदा करे कि अपने गांव और मोहल्ले के निरक्षर लोगों को एक घंटा पढ़ाया करे। आजादी के पूर्व जो लोग देहात में जाकर प्रौढ़ शिक्षा चलाते थे वे कभी पैसे पाने की आशा नहीं रखते थे।

APPENDIX I

PROGRAMME

Tuesday, 19th February, 1980

10.30 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. *Inaugural Session*

(a) Welcome Address—Shri V. S. Mathur

(b) Inaugural Address

—Shri K.R. Narayanan
Vice-Chancellor
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi.

(c) Seminar Director's Remarks
— Dr. Chitra Naik

(d) Vote of Thanks—Shri J.D. Sharma

11.45 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. *First Plenary Session*

1. Discussion and finalisation of sub-themes of the Seminar.
2. Formation of Groups and Committees.

2.30 p.m. to 3.15 p.m. *Second Plenary Session*

Elucidation of Item No. 1

"Recent Trends in Adult Education and Its Implications for Women's Education and Motivation."

3.15 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Group Discussion on Item No. 1

Wednesday, 20th February, 1980, Third Plenary Session

9.30 a.m. to 11.00 a.m.

1. Consideration of Group Reports on Item No. 1
2. Elucidation of Item No. 2

   The Content and Methodology of Adult Education (With Special Reference to Women's Literacy).

11.15 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. Group Discussion on Item No. 2

2.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. *Fourth Plenary Session*

Elucidation of Item No. 3

"Problems of Follow-up and Continuing Education for Literate Women."

3.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Group Discussion on Item No. 3

Thursday, 21st February, 1980

9 30 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. *Fifth Plenary Session*

1. Consideration of Group Reports on Item No. 2
2. Elucidation of Item No. 4

   "Problems of Organising Adult Education Centres for Women."

2.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. Group Discussion on Item No. 4

Friday, 22nd February, 1980 Sixth Plenary Session

9.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m. 1. Consideration of Group Reports of Item No. 3 and 4

2. Finalisation of the Seminar Report.

APPENDIX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

1. Dr. A. Dayal Chand
   Managing Trustee, Ashish Bram Radha Trust,
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